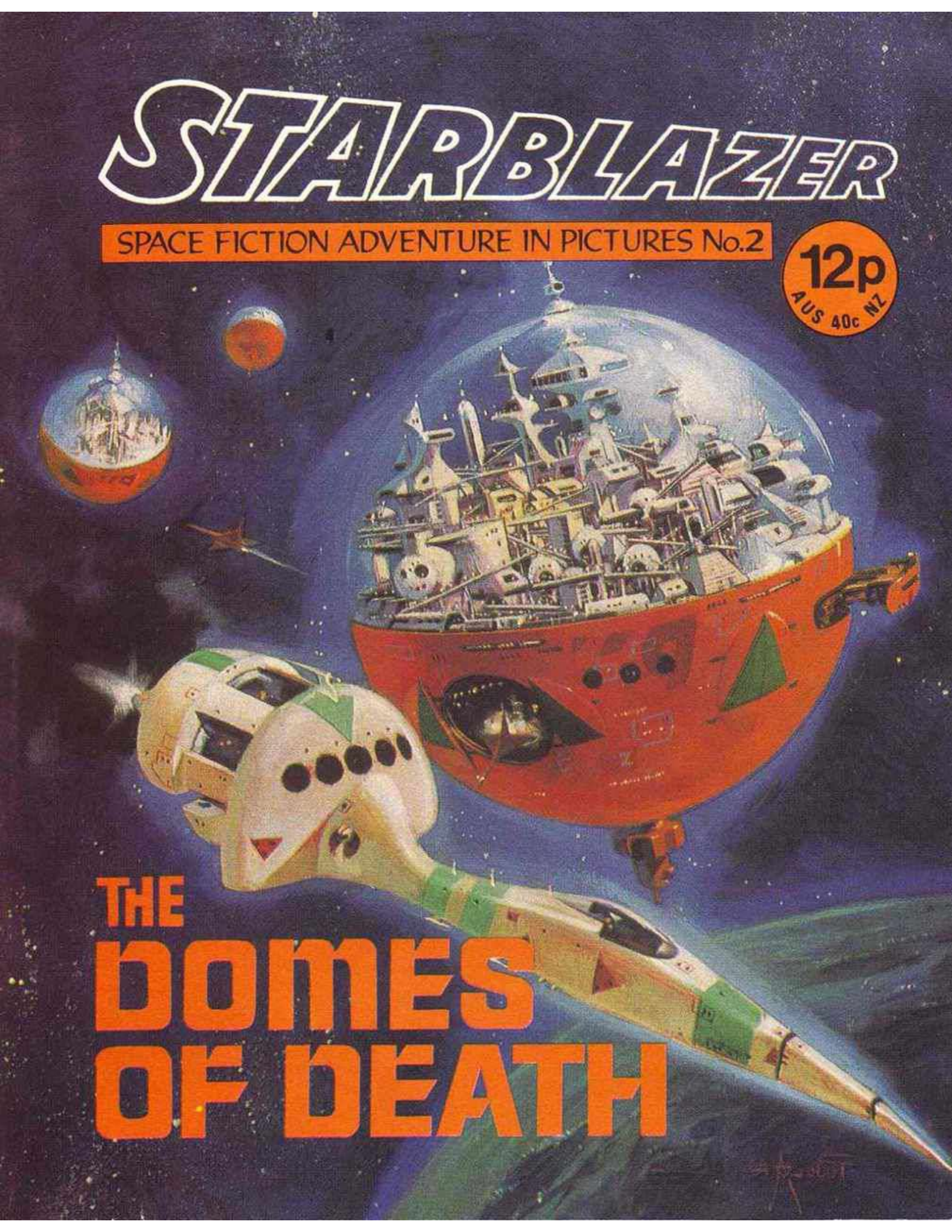


STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No.2

12p
AUS 40c NZ

THE
DOMES
OF DEATH

A detailed illustration of a space scene. In the foreground, a yellow and green spaceship with a friendly face and a long neck is flying towards the right. In the background, a large red spherical space station with a transparent dome is visible, containing a complex cityscape. Another smaller version of this station is in the upper left. The background is a dark blue space with stars and a green planet horizon at the bottom.

STARBLAZER



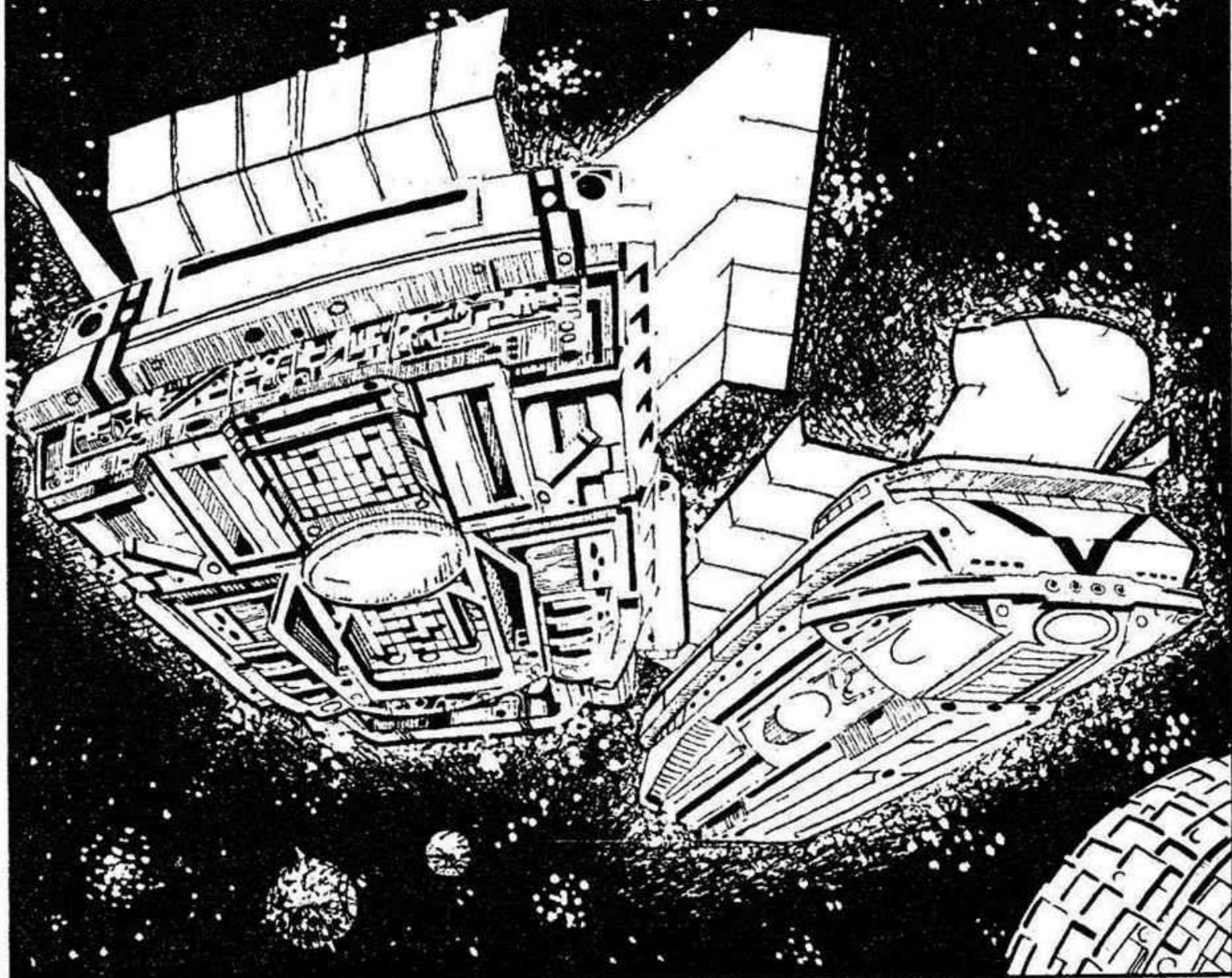
A WAR ENDED
MAN'S TRADITIONAL
LIVING PLACES—THE
SURFACES OF PLANETS.
FEW INHABITABLE PLANETS
REMAINED AND ARTIFICIAL
SATELLITE WORLDS WERE THE
ONLY MEANS OF SURVIVAL.

AS FUEL-BEARING MINERALS EXISTED
ONLY IN SMALL QUANTITIES, AN ALTERNATIVE
POWER SOURCE HAD TO BE FOUND
... AND FOUND IT WAS. THE NATURAL ETHER
CURRENTS IN SPACE WERE USED LIKE THE TRADE
WINDS IN SAILING SHIP DAYS—TO PULL AND PUSH
SPACECRAFT AT GREAT SPEED THROUGH THE ENDLESS
EMPTYNESS BY MEANS OF "SAILS."

MANY TRAMP VESSELS PLIED BETWEEN THE SATELLITES,
TAKING ANY CARGO THEY COULD CARRY. SHRAPNEL STEVENS
WAS ONE SUCH TRAMP SKIPPER, BUT ON ONE VOYAGE HE LITTLE
KNEW HE WAS BOUND FOR ... **THE DOMES OF DEATH.**

THE DOMES OF DEATH

THE OCEANS OF SPACE ARE THE EARTHMAN'S POND,
AND AN UNARMED FREIGHTER HAS BEEN
CAUGHT AT THE AGE OLD GAME OF EVADING
EXCISE DUTIES WHICH HAD TO BE PAID WHEN A
FREIGHTER PASSED THROUGH A SATELLITE'S AIR-SPACE . . .

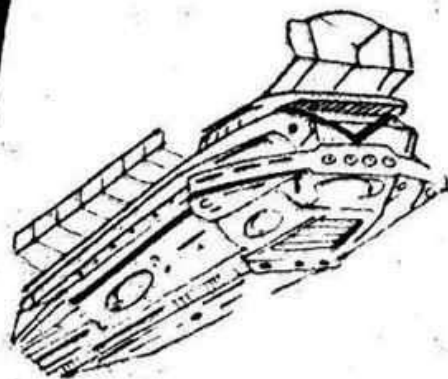


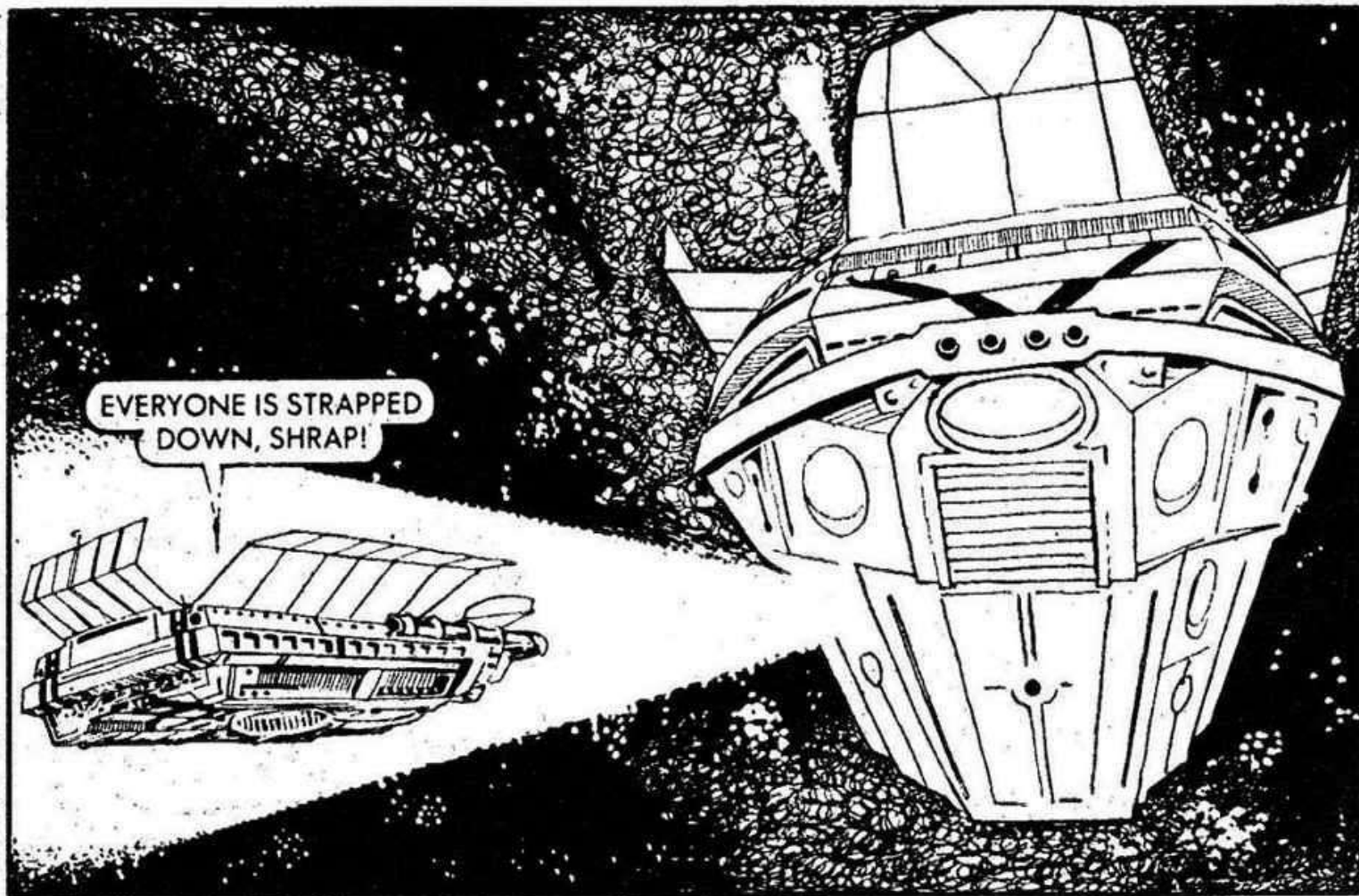
FREIGHTER SKIPPER SHRAPNEL STEVENS HAD
TRADED IN UNCHARTED SPACE FOR YEARS.

THERE'S A
CUSTOM'S STAR
CLIPPER CLOSING
ON US WITH GUNS
TRAINED.


EASY, KIDDO! I'VE HAD
'EM ON SCAN FOR A
LONG TIME.

GET THE PASSENGERS STRAPPED IN,
MIDSHIPMAN KIDD. I'M GOING TO
TRY AND BREAK THE TRACTOR
BEAM THAT'S HOLDING US.






THE TRACTOR BEAM SNAPPED UNDER THE STRAIN OF SHRAP'S VIOLENT EVASIVE HANDLING.




WE'RE FREE! A SHIP THAT SIZE CAN'T TURN QUICKLY ENOUGH TO CHASE US.

THE CLIPPER FIRED ON SHRAP'S CRAFT WITH DEADLY ACCURACY—



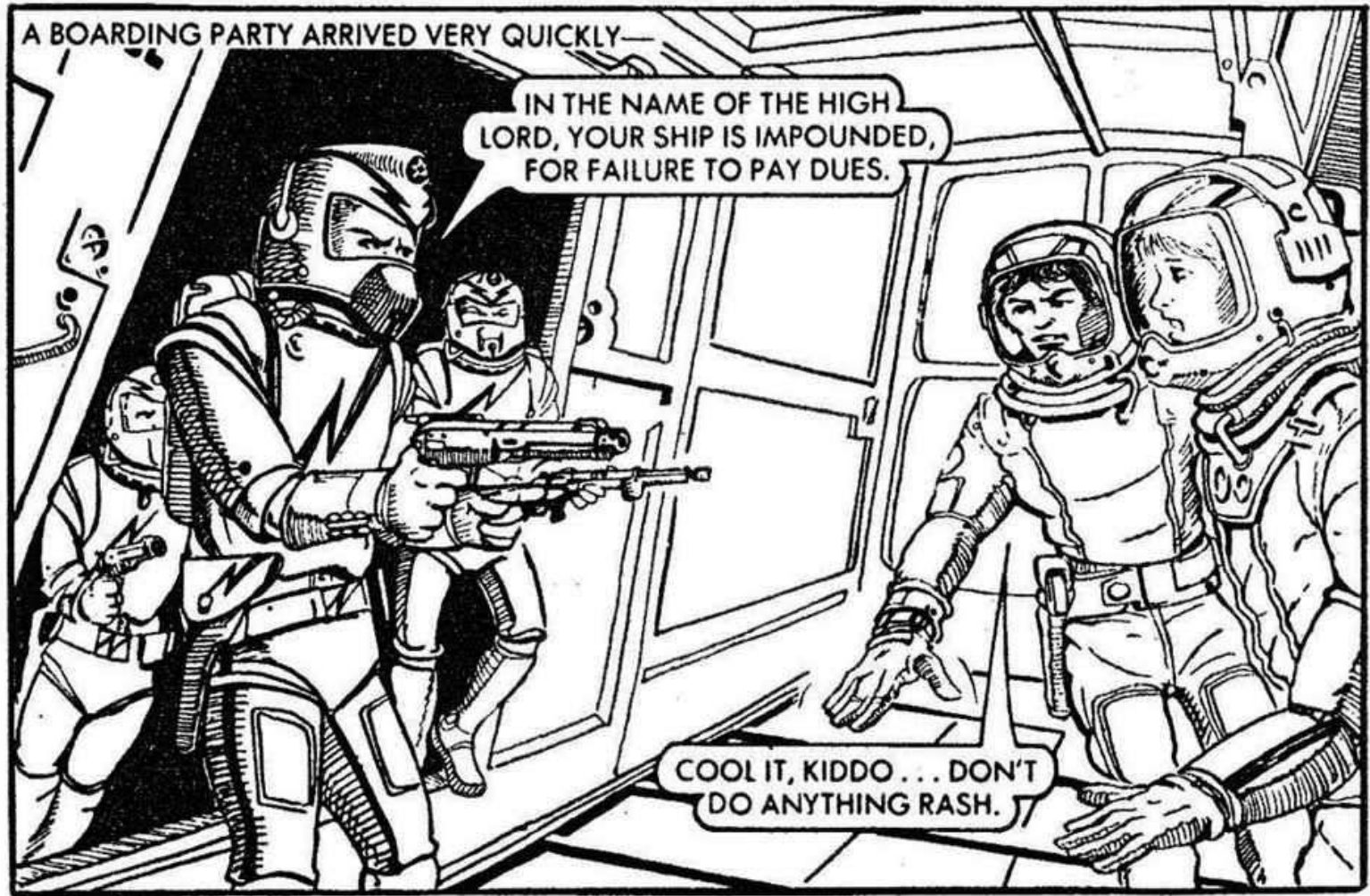
THEIR SHOOTING HAS IMPROVED. IT'S TIME TO PACK IT IN.



STAND BY TO SURRENDER . . .
WE'VE TOO MANY PASSENGERS
FOR US TO RISK ANYTHING.

OK, SKIPPER!

A BOARDING PARTY ARRIVED VERY QUICKLY—

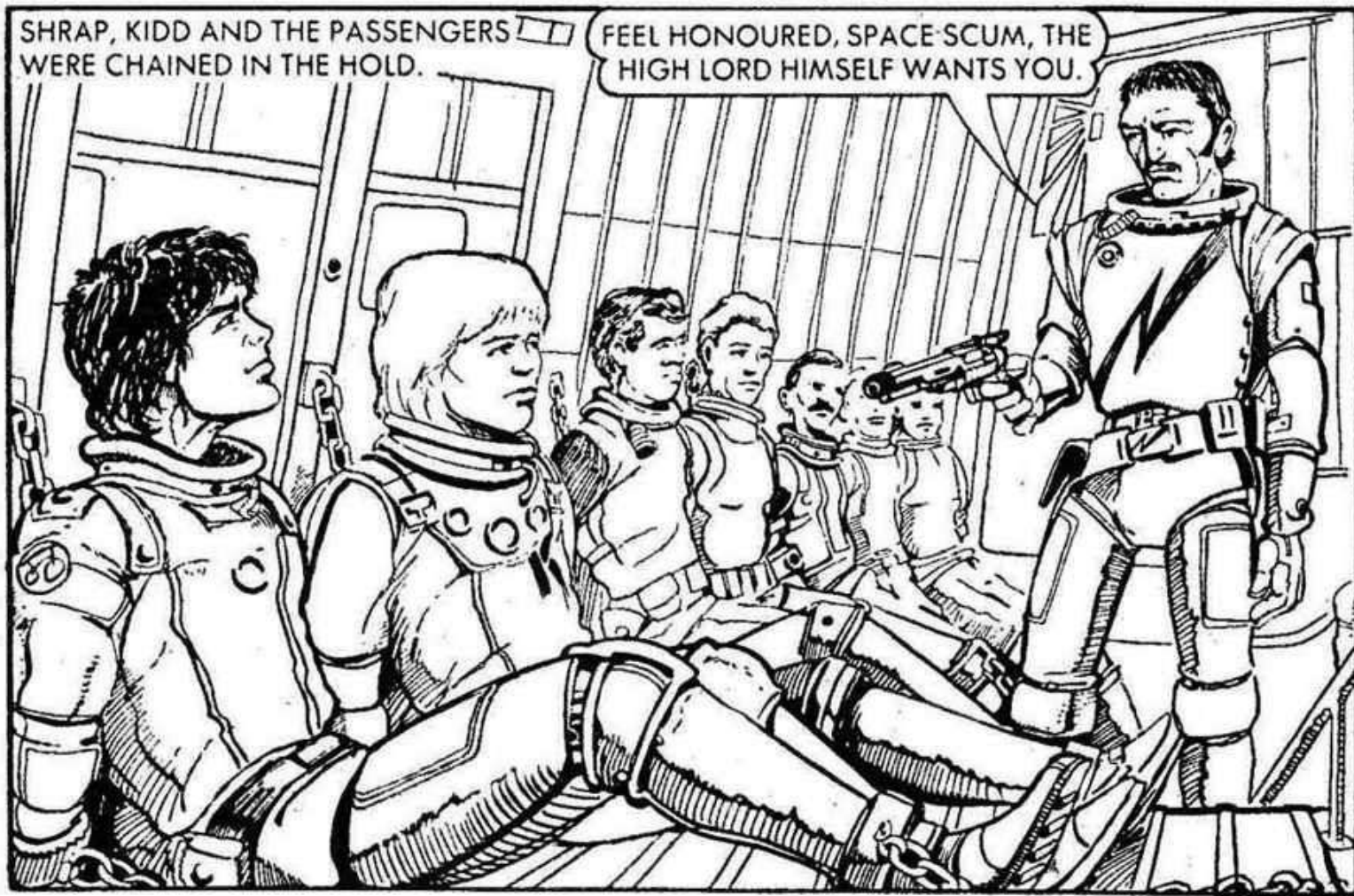


IN THE NAME OF THE HIGH
LORD, YOUR SHIP IS IMPOUNDED,
FOR FAILURE TO PAY DUES.

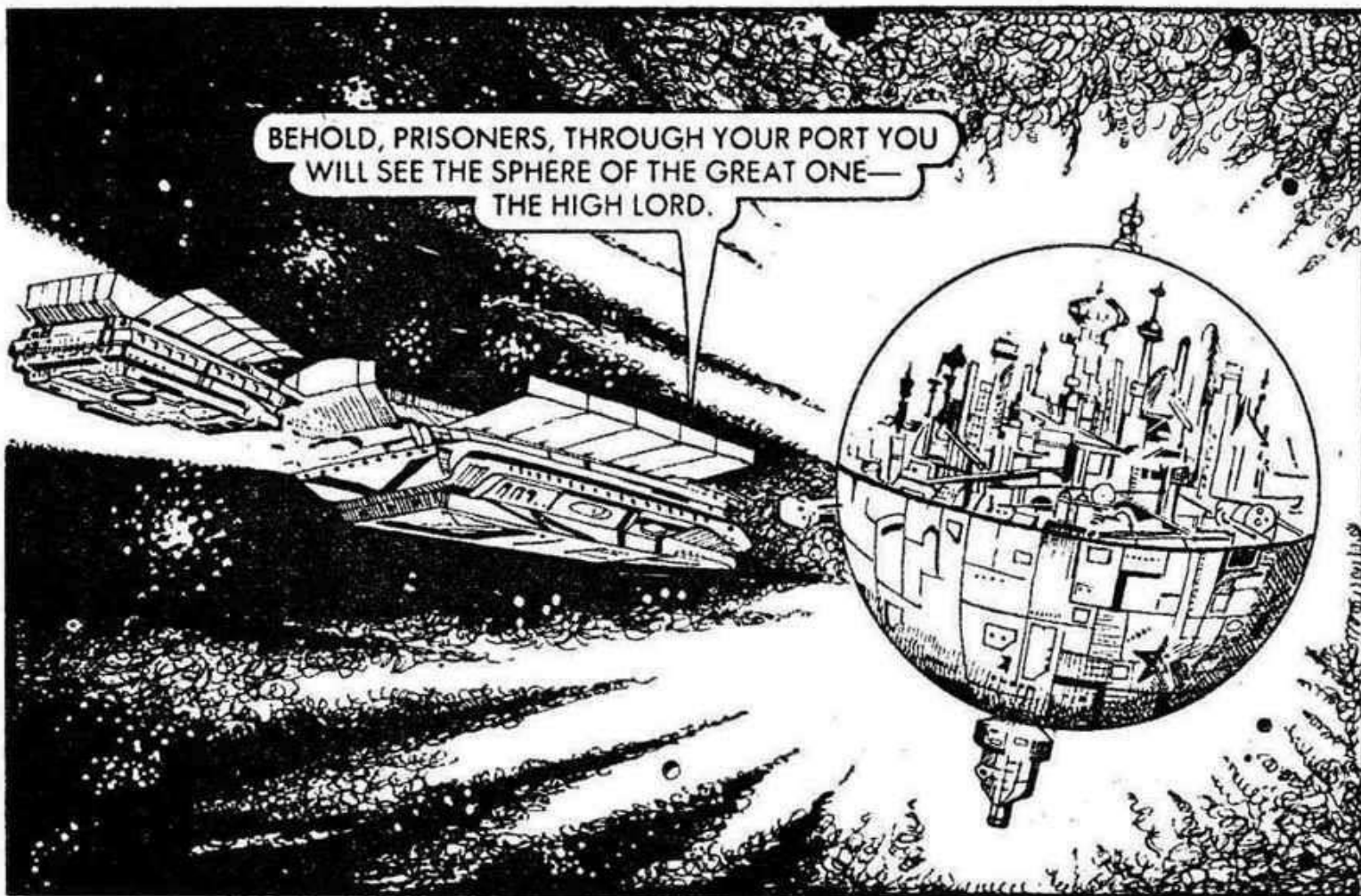
COOL IT, KIDDO . . . DON'T
DO ANYTHING RASH.

SHRAP, KIDD AND THE PASSENGERS
WERE CHAINED IN THE HOLD.

FEEL HONOURED, SPACE SCUM, THE
HIGH LORD HIMSELF WANTS YOU.



BEHOLD, PRISONERS, THROUGH YOUR PORT YOU
WILL SEE THE SPHERE OF THE GREAT ONE—
THE HIGH LORD.



THE HIGH LORD SAT IN HIS
PLEASURE DOME—

I WISH TO RELIEVE MY
BOREDOM WITH BLOOD!

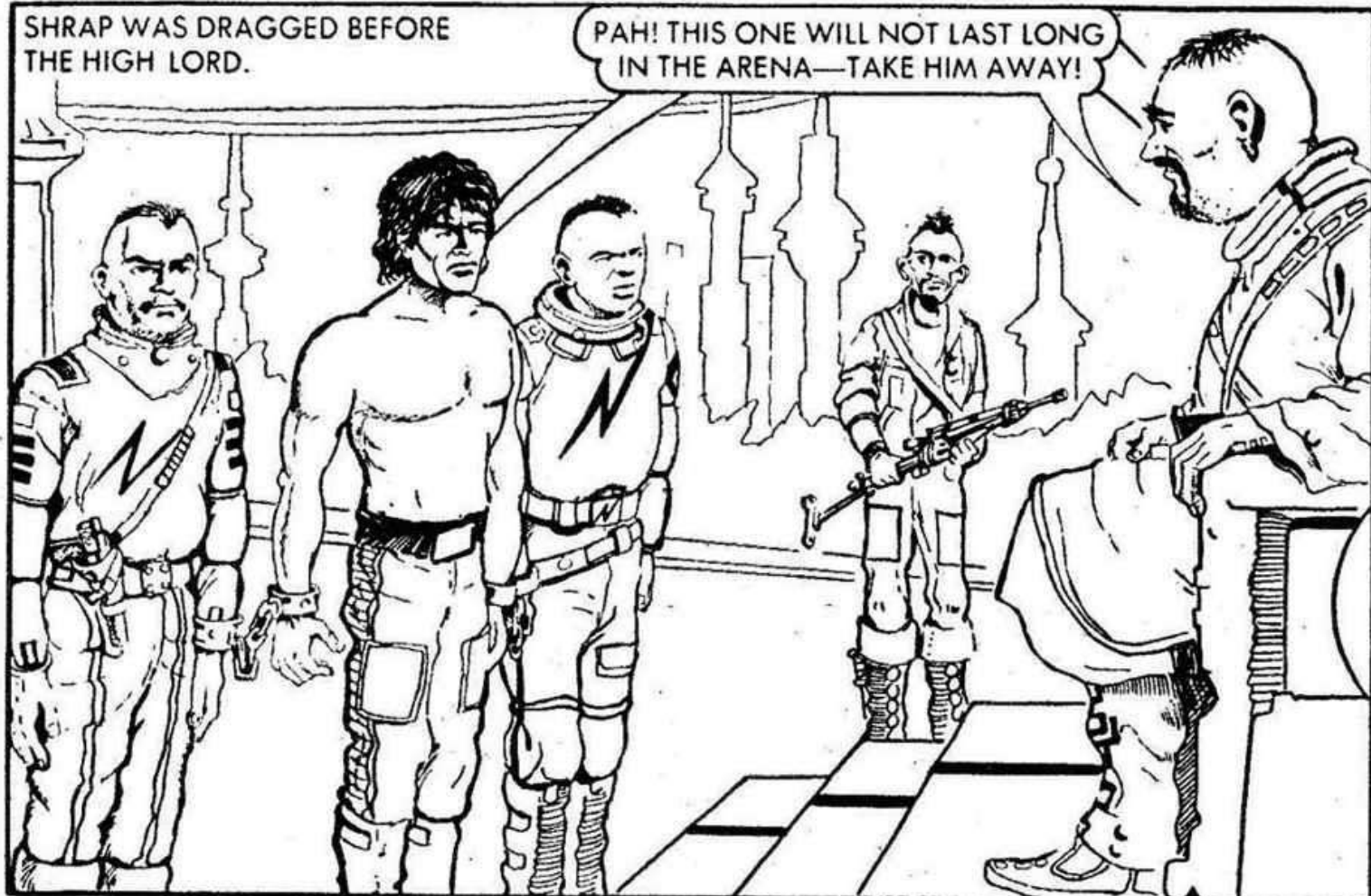
NEW PRISONERS HAVE BEEN
BROUGHT, HIGH LORD.

AMONG THE CAPTIVES COULD BE A
SPECIAL ONE.

IS THAT SO? PREPARE THE
ARENA IMMEDIATELY!

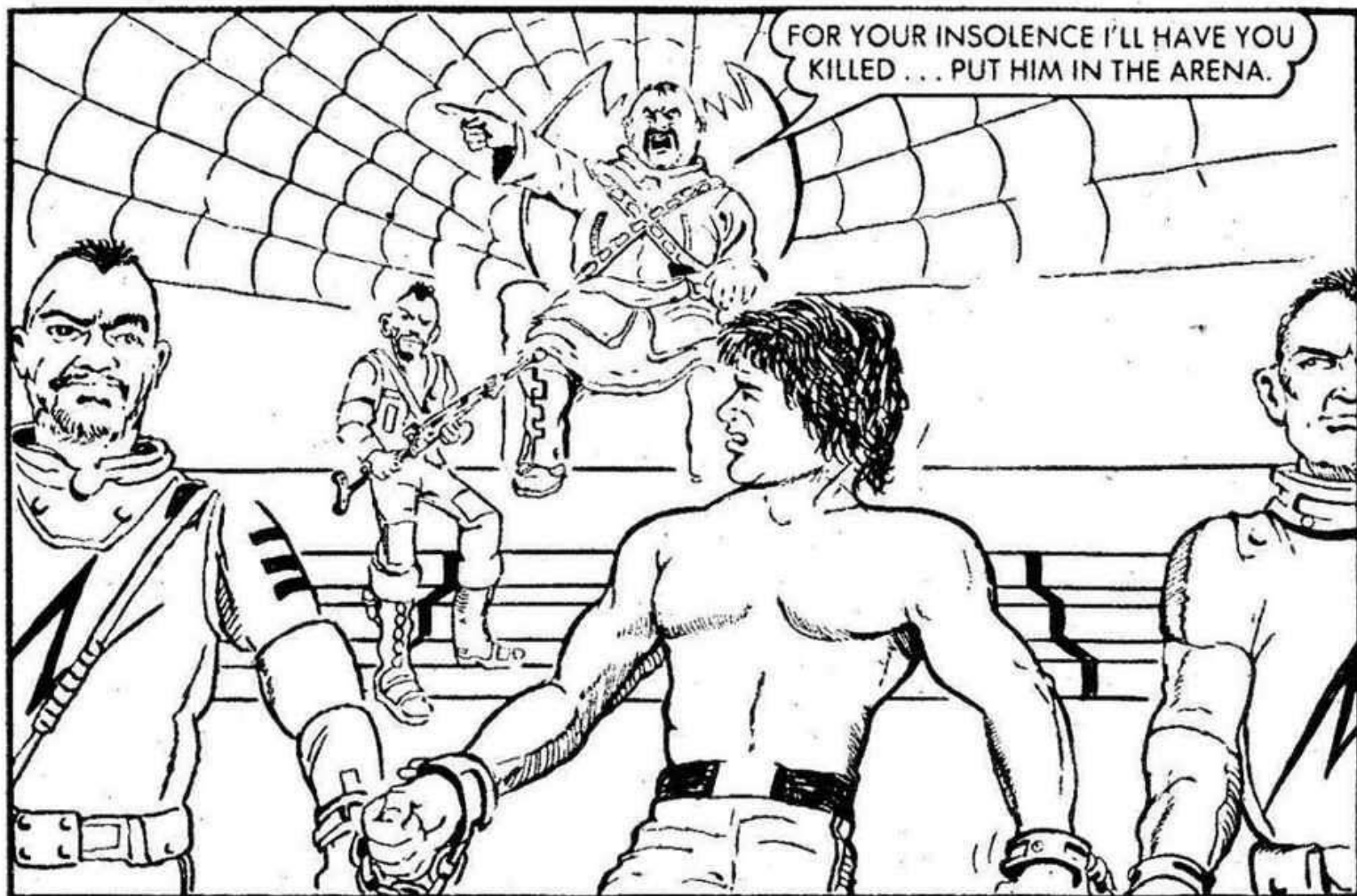
SHRAP WAS DRAGGED BEFORE
THE HIGH LORD.

PAH! THIS ONE WILL NOT LAST LONG
IN THE ARENA—TAKE HIM AWAY!



I'LL FIGHT, FATSO... BUT
LET THE OTHERS GO!





THE ARENA WAS A SPHERE OF WEIGHT-LESSNESS FORMED BY ANTI-GRAVITY PROJECTORS.

WHAT THE COSMOS IS THIS?

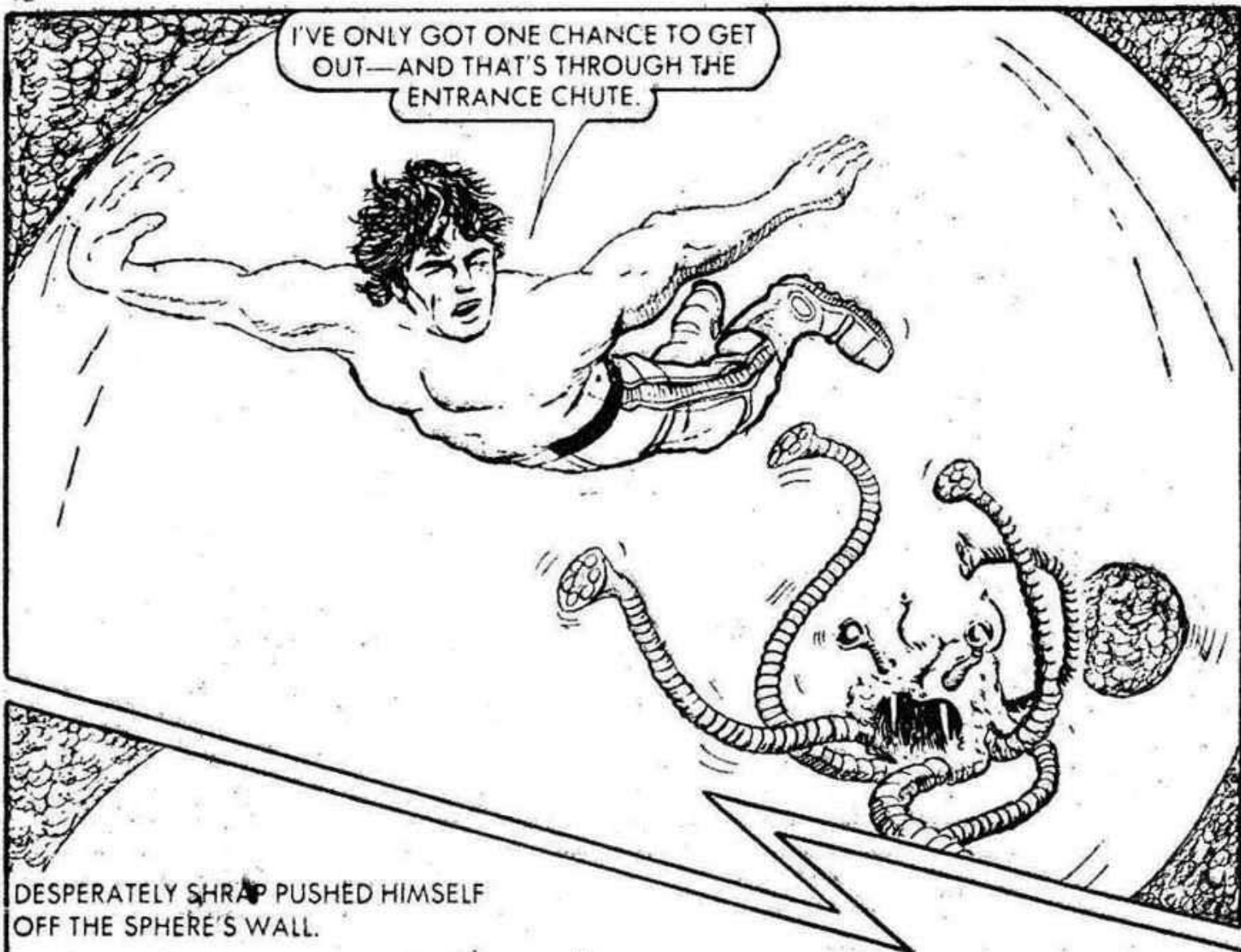


SHRAP'S OPPONENT HAD BEEN DREDGED FROM THE SARGASSO SEA OF SPACE



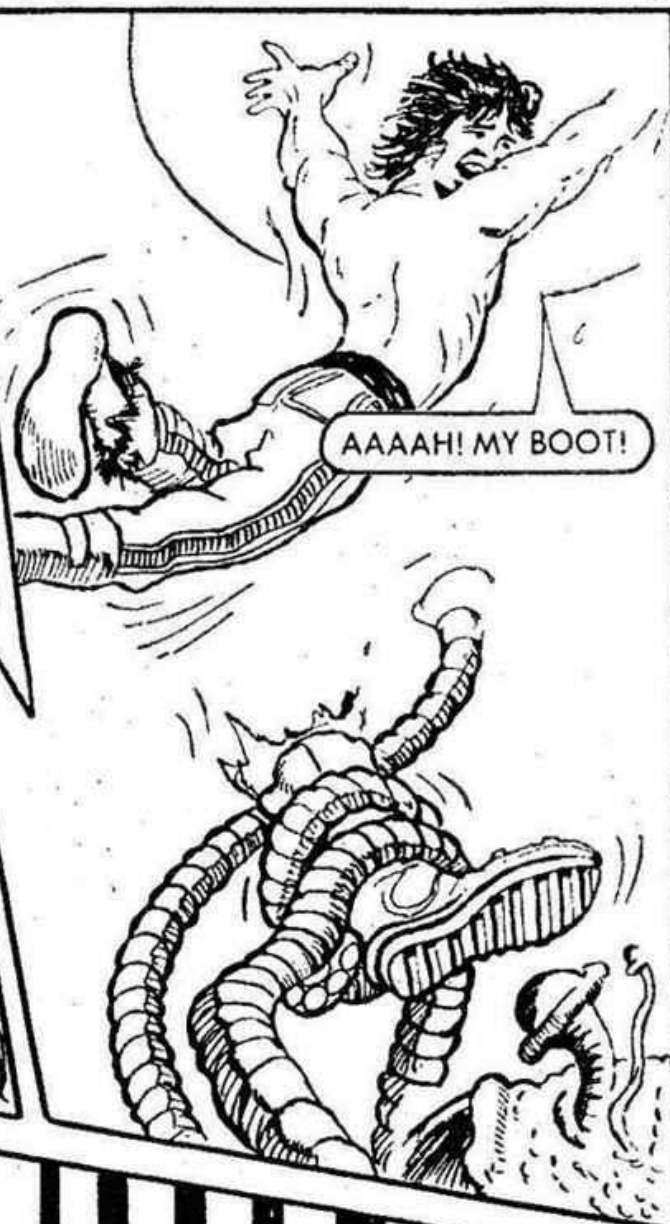
COSMIC CREEPS!

I'VE ONLY GOT ONE CHANCE TO GET
OUT—AND THAT'S THROUGH THE
ENTRANCE CHUTE.



DESPERATELY SHRAP PUSHED HIMSELF
OFF THE SPHERE'S WALL.





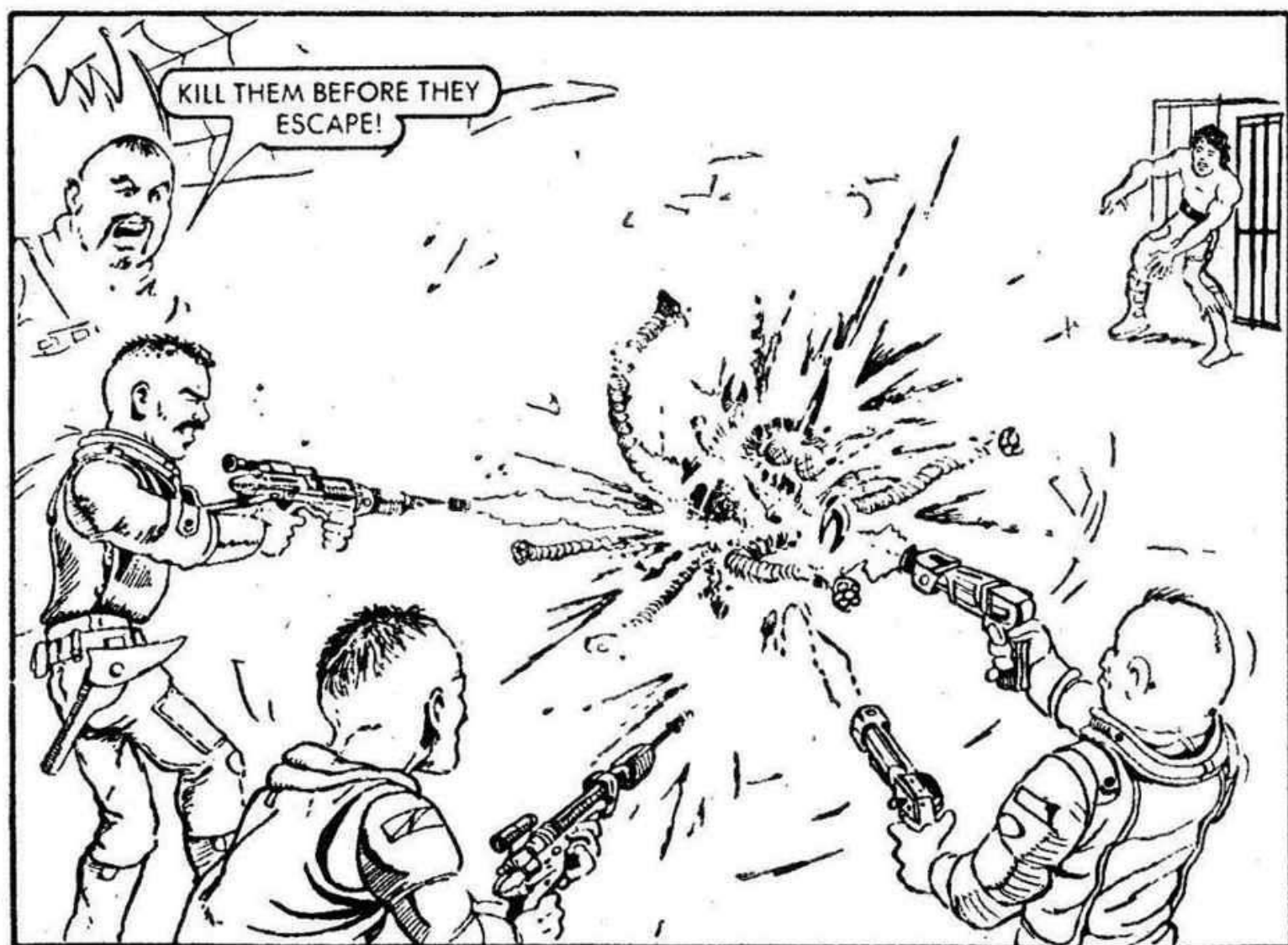
AT THE OTHER END OF THE ENTRANCE WAS A HORRIFIC ZOO.



MUSH! GET DOWN THERE—
YOUR PAL'S WAITING FOR
YOU!



KILL THEM BEFORE THEY
ESCAPE!



SHRAP WAS BROUGHT BEFORE THE HIGH LORD AGAIN

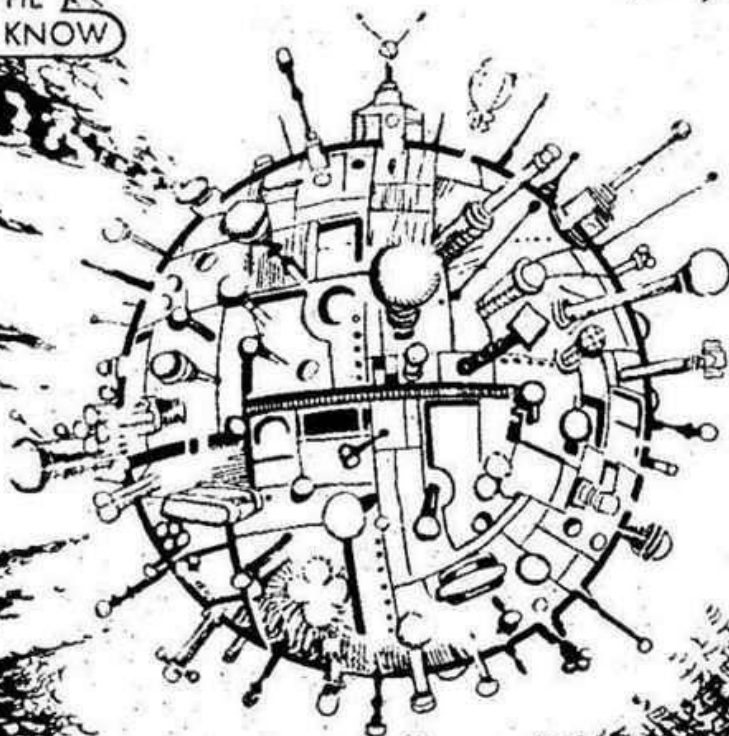
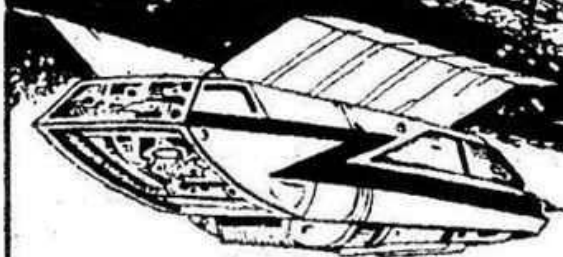


SHRAPNEL STEVENS SET OUT ON HIS QUEST.



LIKE MANY TRAVELLERS SEARCHING FOR A PATH, SHRAPNEL STEVENS HEADED FOR THE CROSSROADS.

I'LL ASK THE KEEPER OF THE SPACELANES. HE IS SAID TO KNOW ALL.



JUST HOW OLD THE KEEPER WAS, NOBODY KNEW

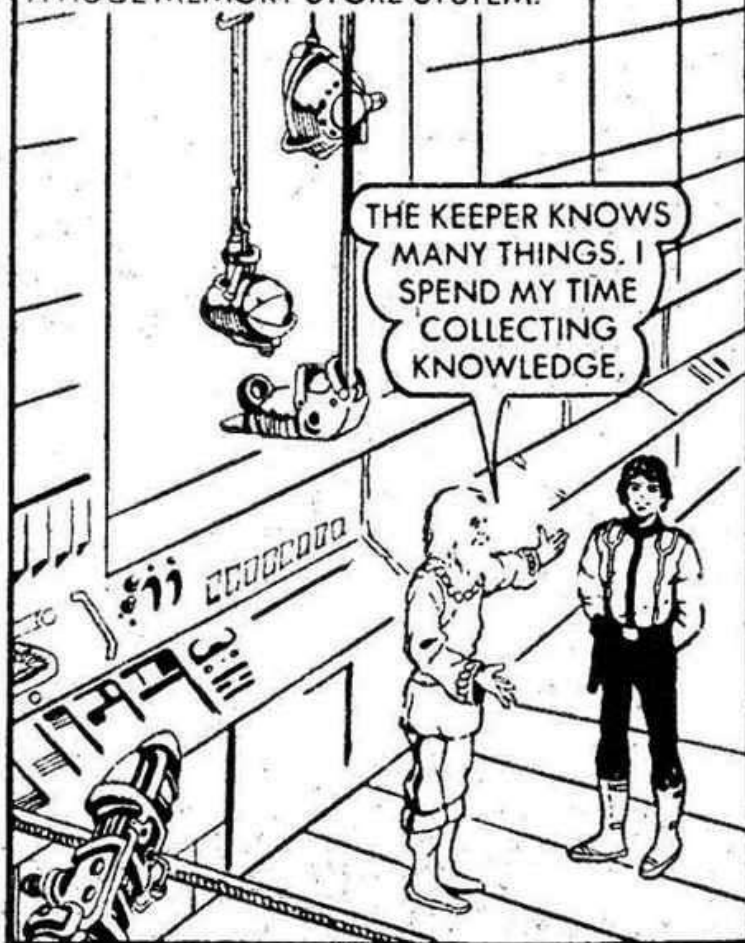
WELCOME, SHRAPNEL STEVENS.

YOU K-KNOW MY NAME!



THE SPACELANE LIGHTHOUSE CONTAINED A HUGE MEMORY STORE SYSTEM.

THE KEEPER KNOWS MANY THINGS. I SPEND MY TIME COLLECTING KNOWLEDGE.

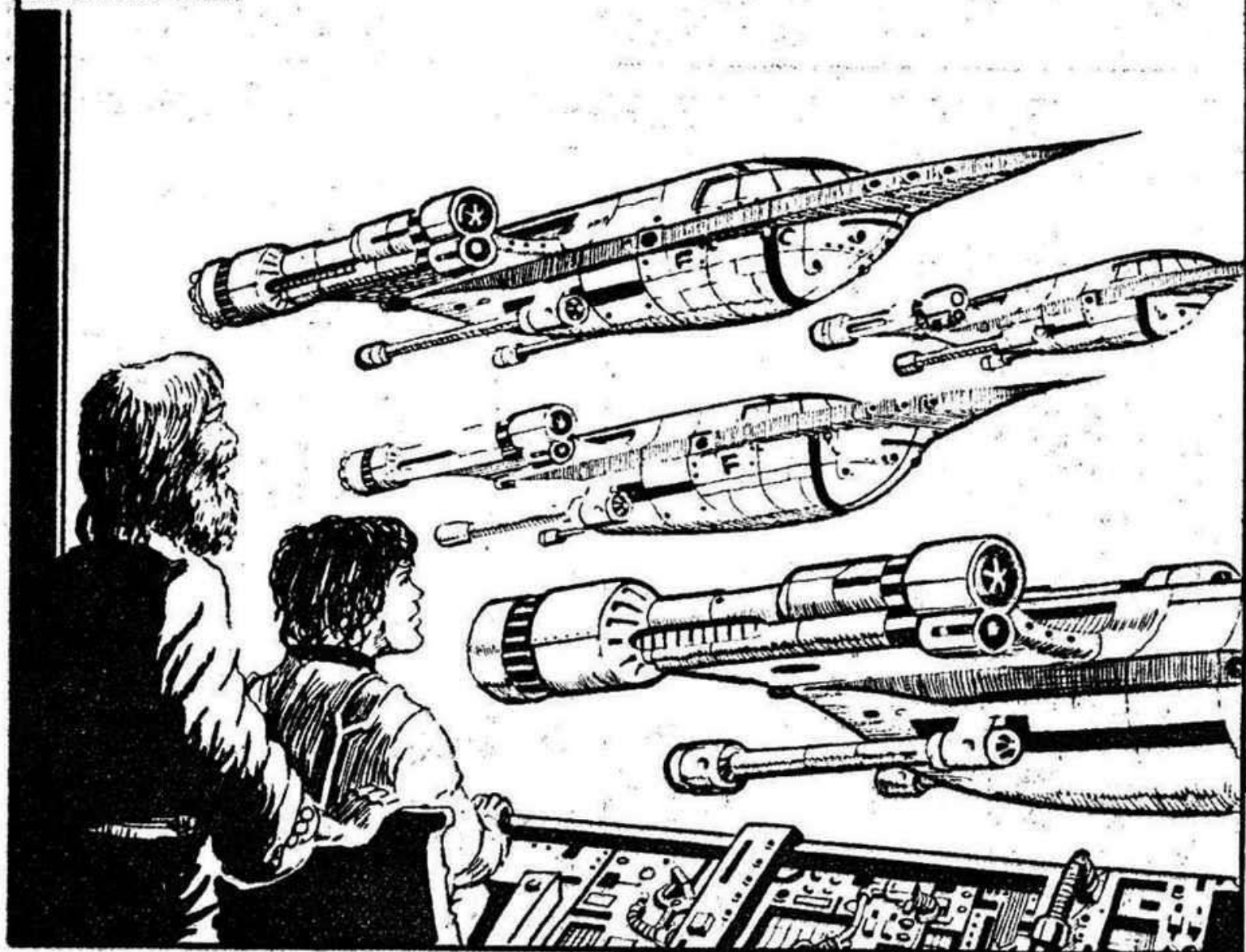


THE KEEPER KNEW OF THE QUEST FOR THE FACE.

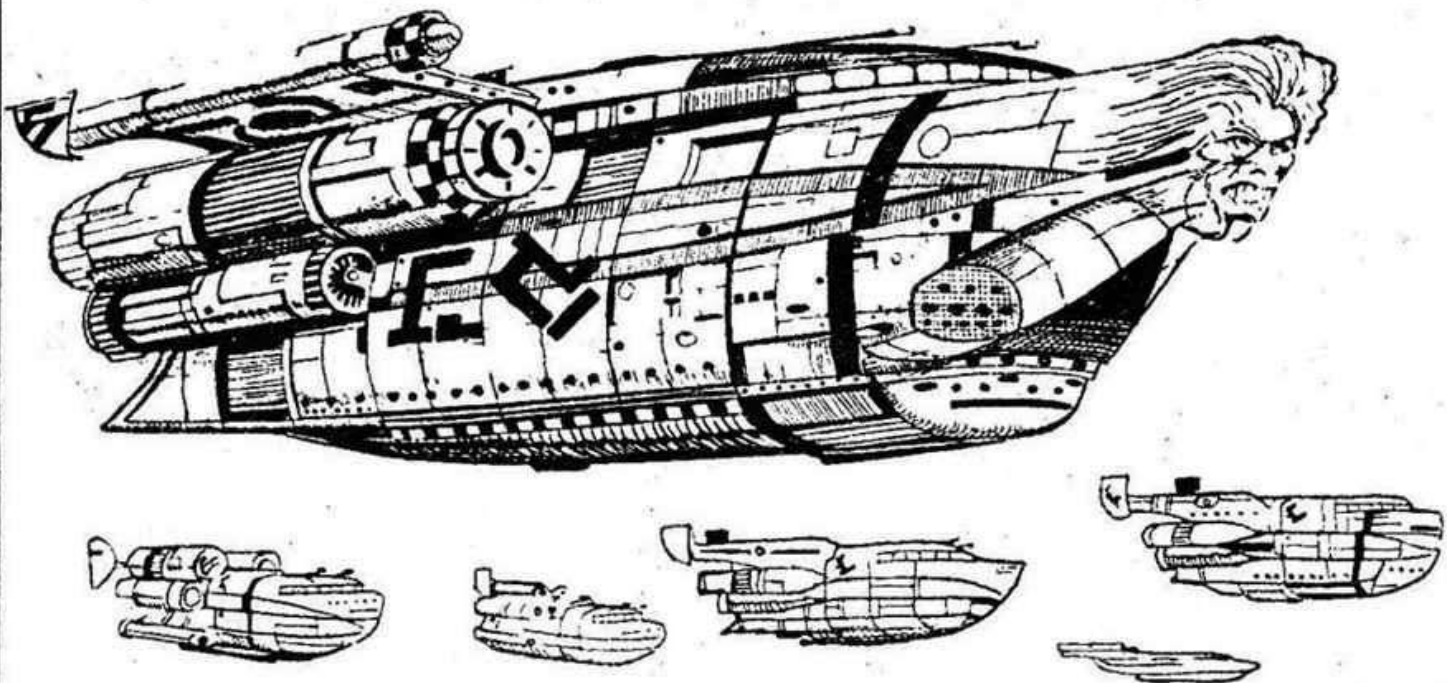
NOBODY HAS SEEN THE FACE
YOU SEEK AND LIVED—BUT I CAN
SHOW YOU.



IMAGES FORMED OF THE TIME BEFORE MEN LEFT THE PLANETS
TO LIVE ON ARTIFICIAL WORLDS—BEFORE SHIPS WERE
POWERED BY NATURAL FORCES AND WHEN AN EVIL HIGH
LORD HELD SWAY



THE HIGH LORD'S FLAGSHIP CARRIED A FIGUREHEAD OF HIS FACE, AND THE GALACTIC EMPIRE TREMBLED UNDER ITS GAZE—



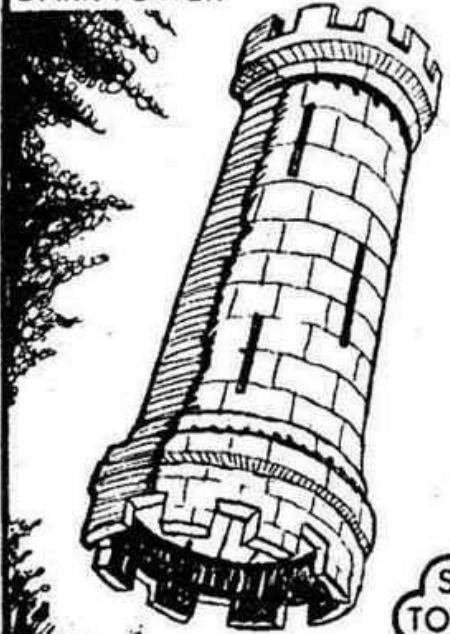
IN A FINAL BATTLE, THE HIGH LORD'S RIVALS UNLEASHED DESTRUCTOR BEAMS SO POWERFUL THAT BOTH FLEETS WERE DESTROYED.



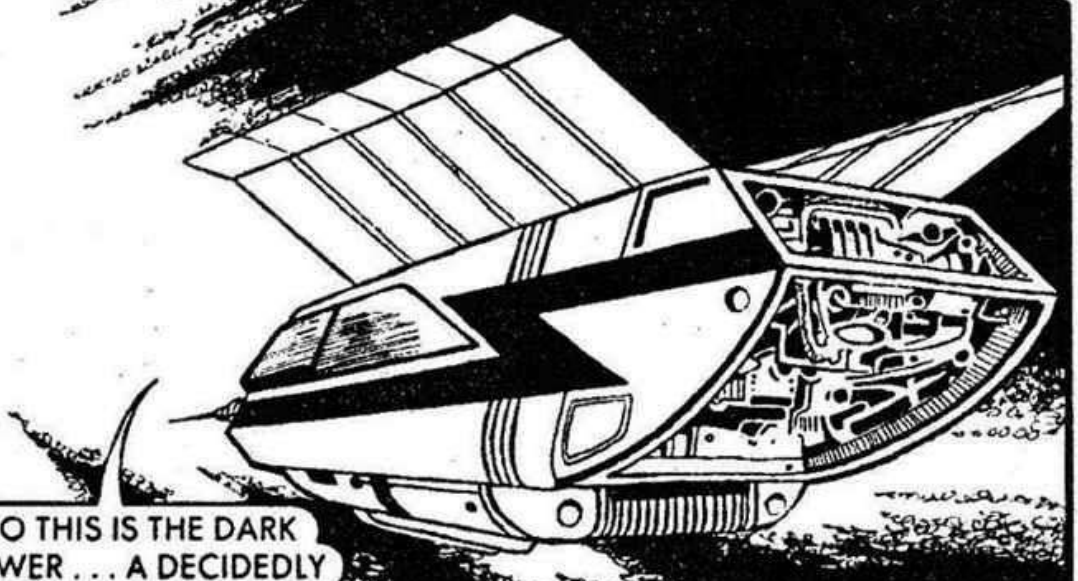
THE FIGUREHEAD SURVIVED IMPREGNATED WITH DEADLY RADIATION . . . BUT THAT DEADLY RADIATION SHRUNK THE HEAD TO HUMAN SIZE.



SHRAPNEL STEVENS DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO FIND THE DARK TOWER



SO THIS IS THE DARK TOWER . . . A DECIDEDLY ODD PLACE.



MANY OF THE SATELLITES WERE DESIGNED AT THE WHIM OF THEIR ECCENTRIC OWNERS.

INSIDE THE SATELLITE THE ANCIENT
THEME WAS COMPLETE.

SOMEONE COMES
CALLING LATE.



THE SPACE YACHT HAD BEEN SPOTTED LONG BEFORE
BY THE SATELLITE'S RADAR.

WELCOME! THE GUEST
ROOM IS PREPARED, SIR.

THANK YOU.



THE COUNT OF THE DARK TOWER
WISHES TO TAKE WINE WITH YOU.

MY PLEASURE.





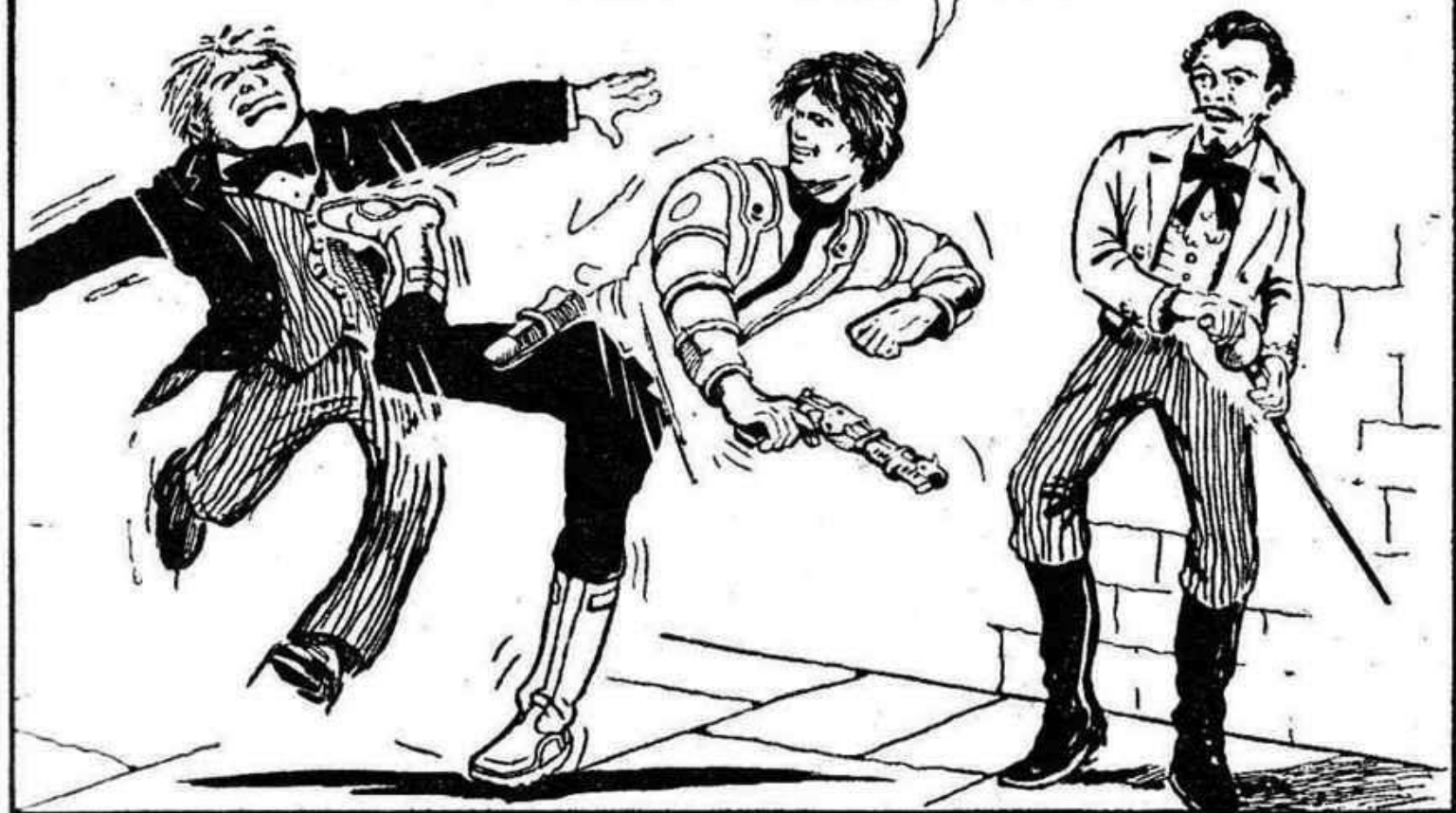
SHRAP WAS SUDDENLY SEIZED AND FORCED TO THE GROUND.

HA! HA! HA! NOW YOU ARE MY PRISONER! YOU MUST SAMPLE MY TORTURE CHAMBER!

SOME HOST YOU ARE.



SORRY, THAT WAS BELOW THE BELT — BUT SO IS TORTURING GUESTS!





I HOPE THERE'S ANOTHER
CLUE TO THE FACE'S
WHEREABOUTS IN THE SUIT.



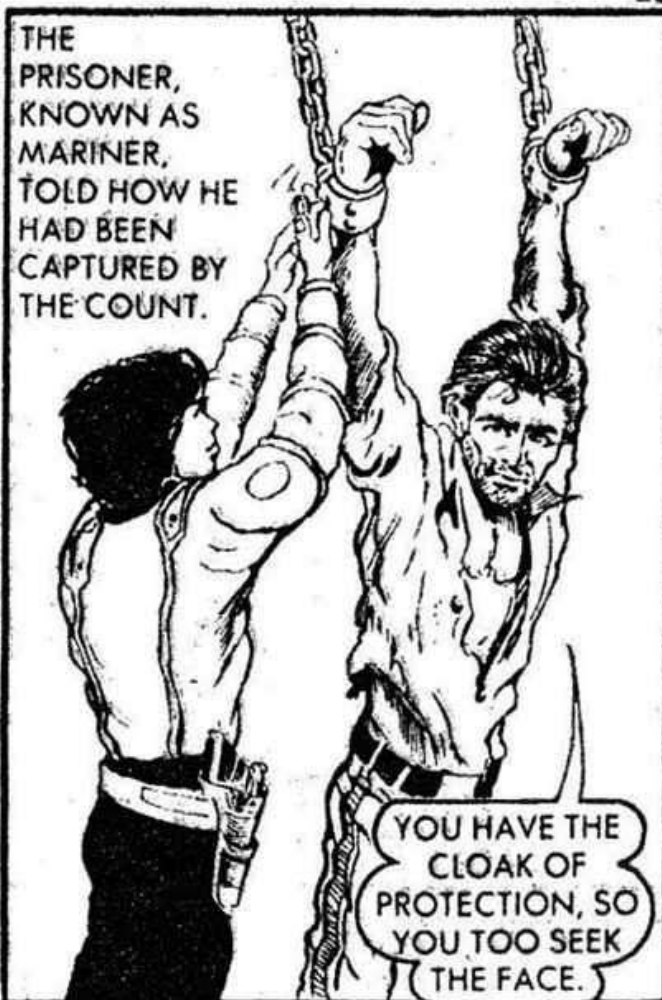
AS SHRAP LEFT THE HALL WITH THE SUIT.

HELP ME,
PLEASE!

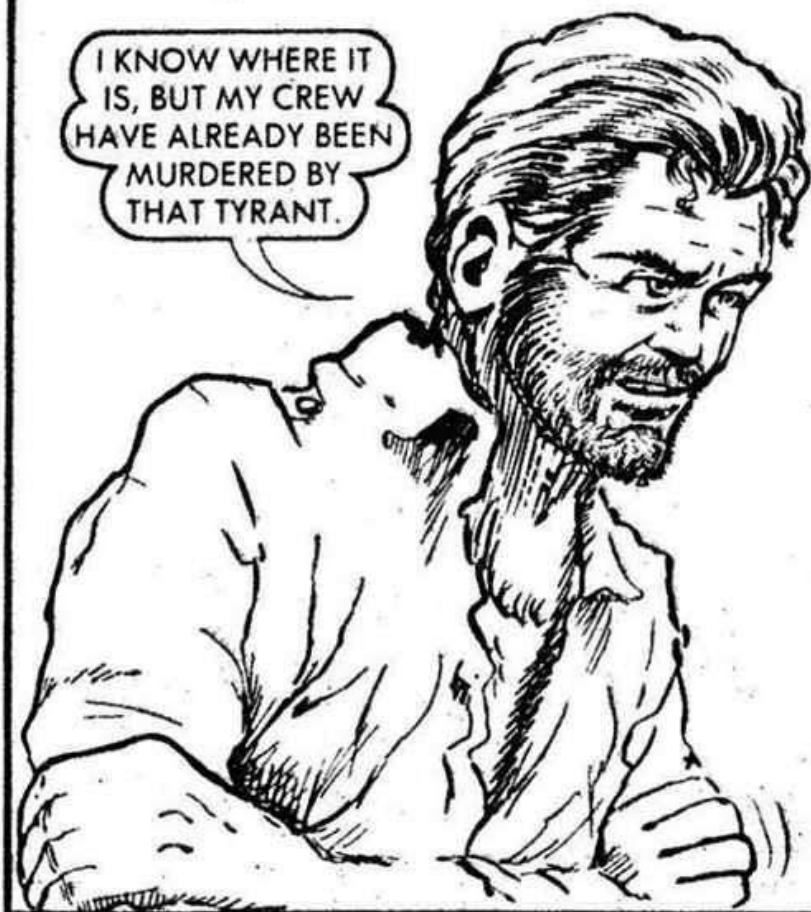




THE PRISONER, KNOWN AS MARINER, TOLD HOW HE HAD BEEN CAPTURED BY THE COUNT.



MARINER HAD ALSO BEEN CHOSEN BY THE HIGH LORD TO FIND THE FACE.



WITHOUT WARNING, AN EERIE 3-D PICTURE APPEARED.

ATTENTION STEVENS. MY HOLOGRAM TRANSMISSIONS FOLLOW YOUR PROGRESS.



IT WAS A BROADCAST DESIGNED TO FRIGHTEN SHRAP.

I SAW ALL MY CREW MURDERED THAT WAY.

I REMIND YOU THAT TIME IS SHORT.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.



SHRAP FELT MORE CONFIDENT
NOW MARINER HAD JOINED HIM.

THE FACE IS LODGED
ON THE PURPLE PLANET.

BUT MAN HASN'T BEEN ON
PLANETS SINCE THE FINAL
BATTLE—HOW DO WE LAND ON
IT? THE ART OF SOFT LANDING
HAS BEEN LOST FOR EONS.

I KNOW WHERE A SOFT-
LANDING SHIP CAN BE
FOUND.



IN THAT CASE, THE
CONTROLS ARE ALL
YOURS MARINER MY
FRIEND.

THE DESTINATION WAS A ROBOT SATELLITE,
KNOWN AS THE SILENT WORLD.

WE MUST ACHIEVE NOT ONLY THE
RELEASE OF YOUR FRIENDS, BUT
VENGEANCE FOR MINE.



THE SPACE YACHT APPROACHED THE SILENT WORLD.

I THOUGHT THESE PLACES
WERE AUTO-GUARDED.

THESE PLACES HAVE BEEN
UNUSED FOR SO LONG
THEIR BATTERIES ARE
FLAT—I HOPE.

THERE IT IS... ALL READY
AND WAITING FOR US,
SHRAP!

I DON'T
LIKE THIS.

AS THE PHOTON POWERED CRAFT LIFTED OFF, THE HEAT FROM THE ENGINES TRIGGERED OFF A DEADLY NET OF LASERS.

IT'S A TRAP!

BURNING BEAMS SCORCHED THE SKIN OF THE VESSEL.

DISCONNECT THE AUTO-PILOT. THE MACHINERY IN HERE COULD BE ROBOT-CONTROLLED AS WELL.

ROBOTS ARE PROGRAMMED, THEREFORE
PREDICTABLE . . . SO IF I DO SOMETHING
UNPREDICTABLE.

THE DEFENCES WERE OUTWITTED,
BEWILDERED BY THE CRAFT'S SUDDEN
CHANGES IN DIRECTION.

WE'VE RUN THE
GAUNTLET OK. WE'RE
ON OUR WAY!

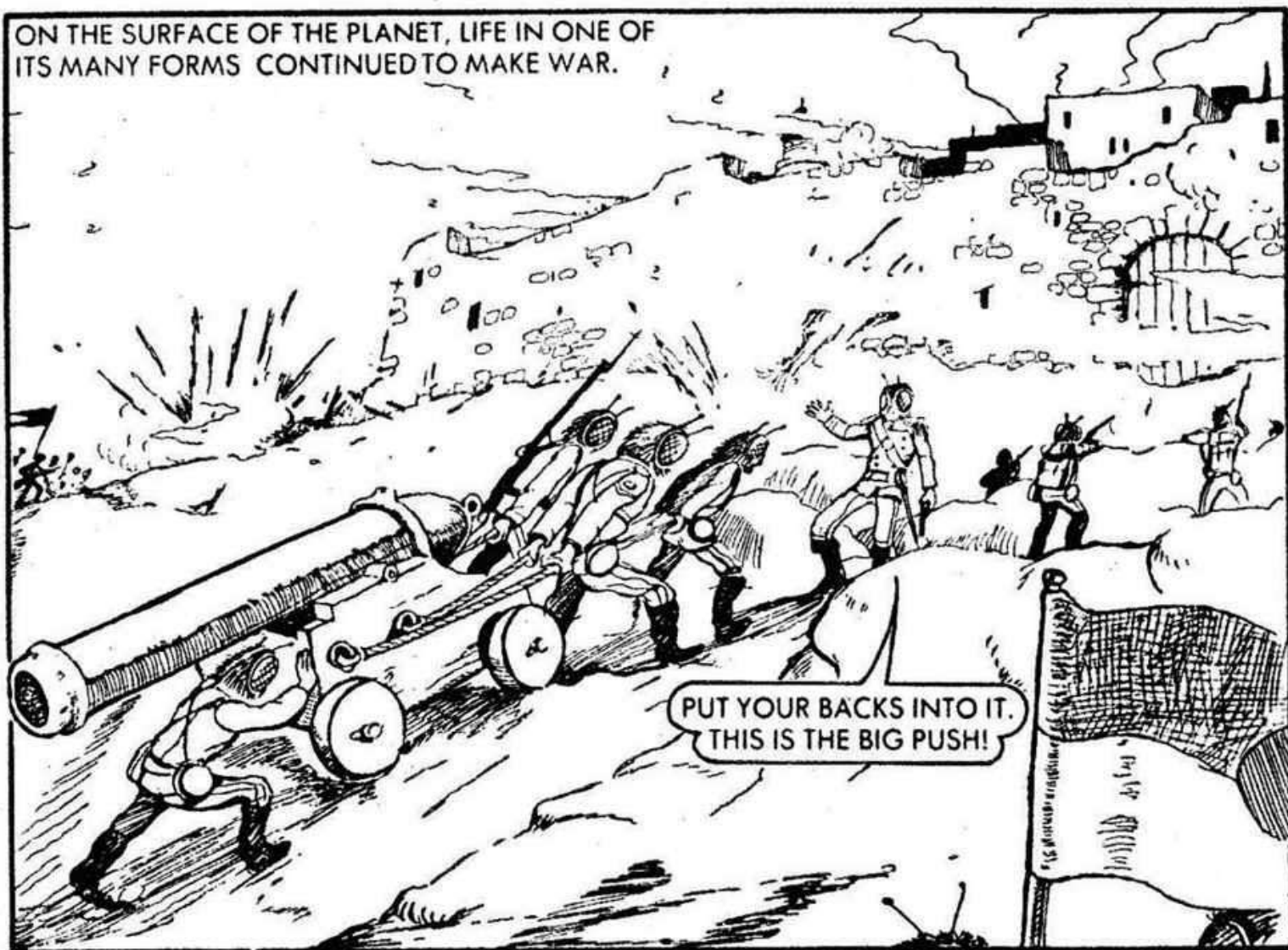


THE PLANET LANDER SOON REACHED THE PURPLE WORLD.

THAT'S IT... THE PURPLE WORLD,
AND THE FACE.



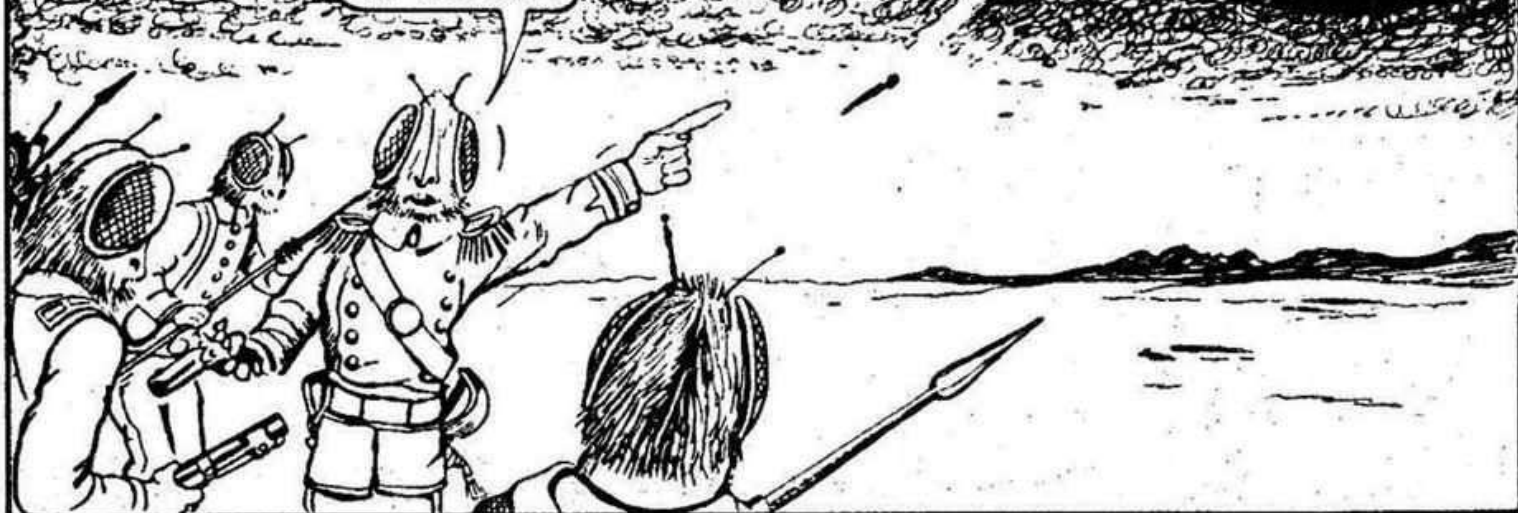
ON THE SURFACE OF THE PLANET, LIFE IN ONE OF
ITS MANY FORMS CONTINUED TO MAKE WAR.



PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT.
THIS IS THE BIG PUSH!

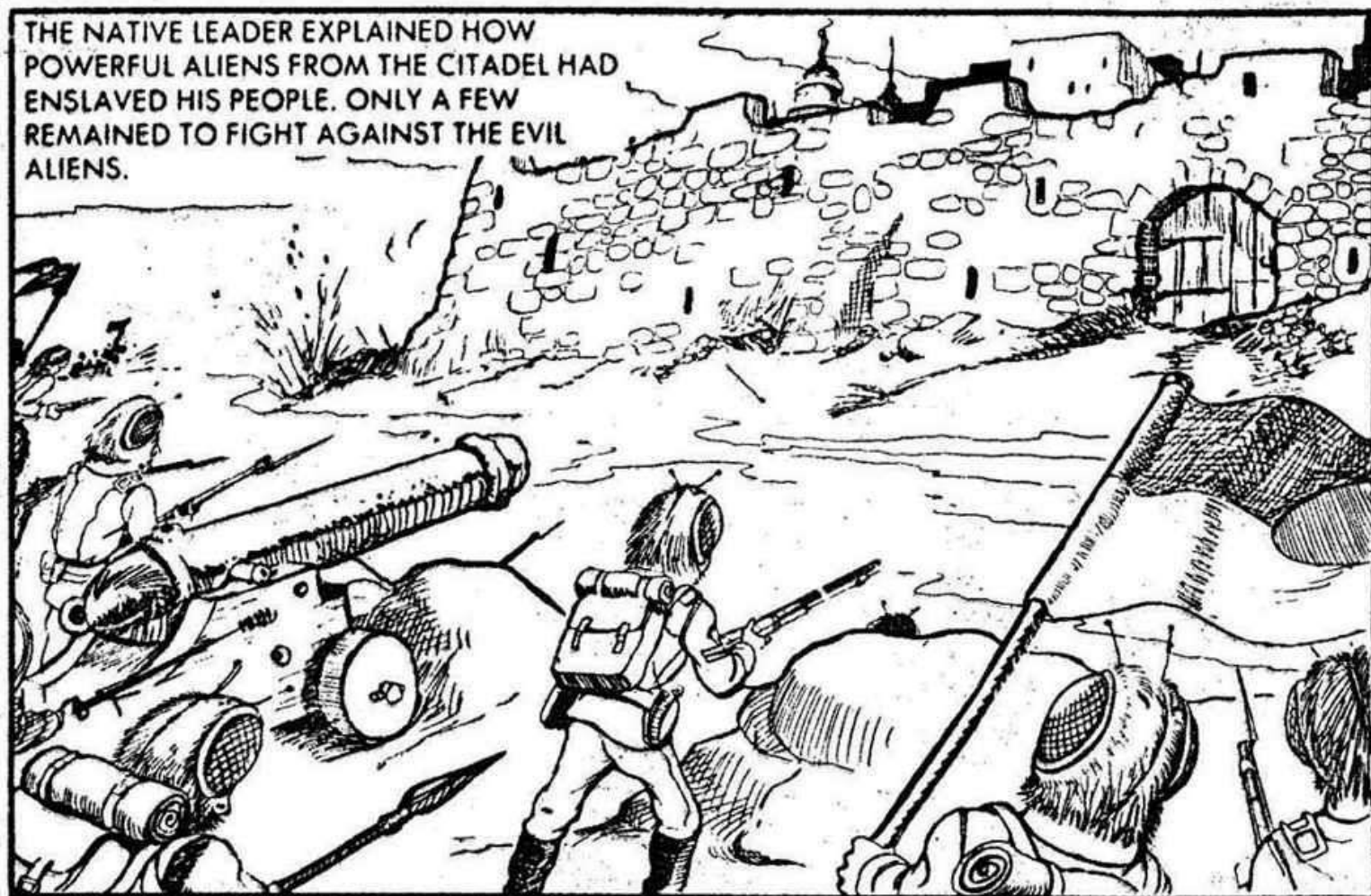
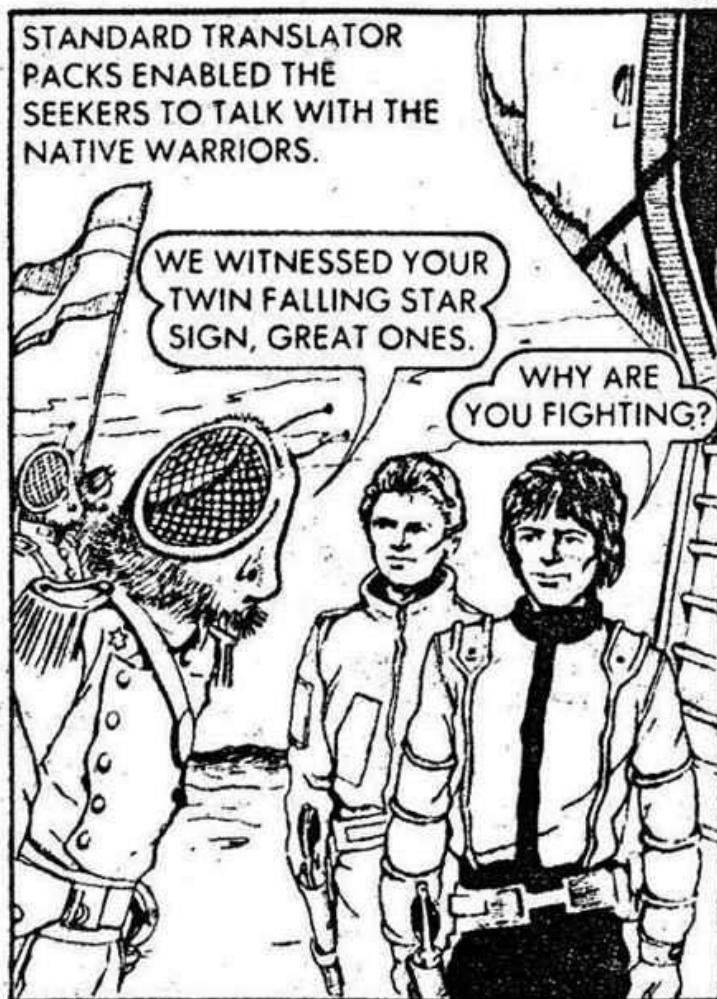
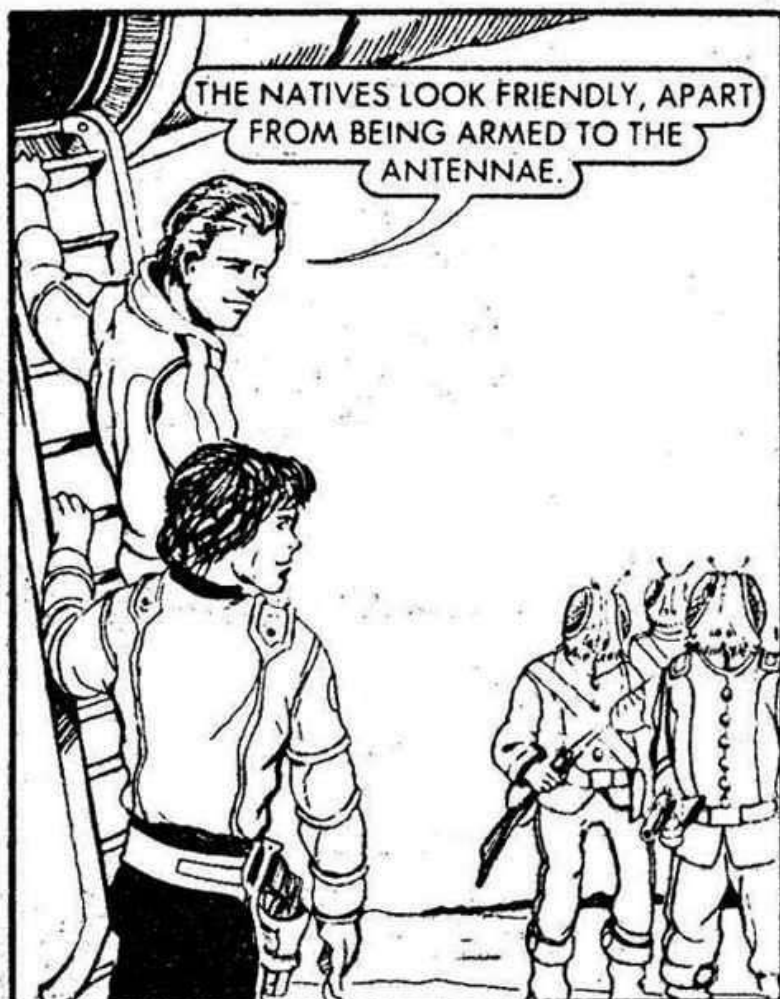
THE BURNING RE-ENTRY SHIELD OF THE LANDER
CAUGHT THE EYE OF THE GENERAL.

A SHOOTING STAR. A SURE SIGN
OF VICTORY!



MARINER ORBITED AND LANDED.





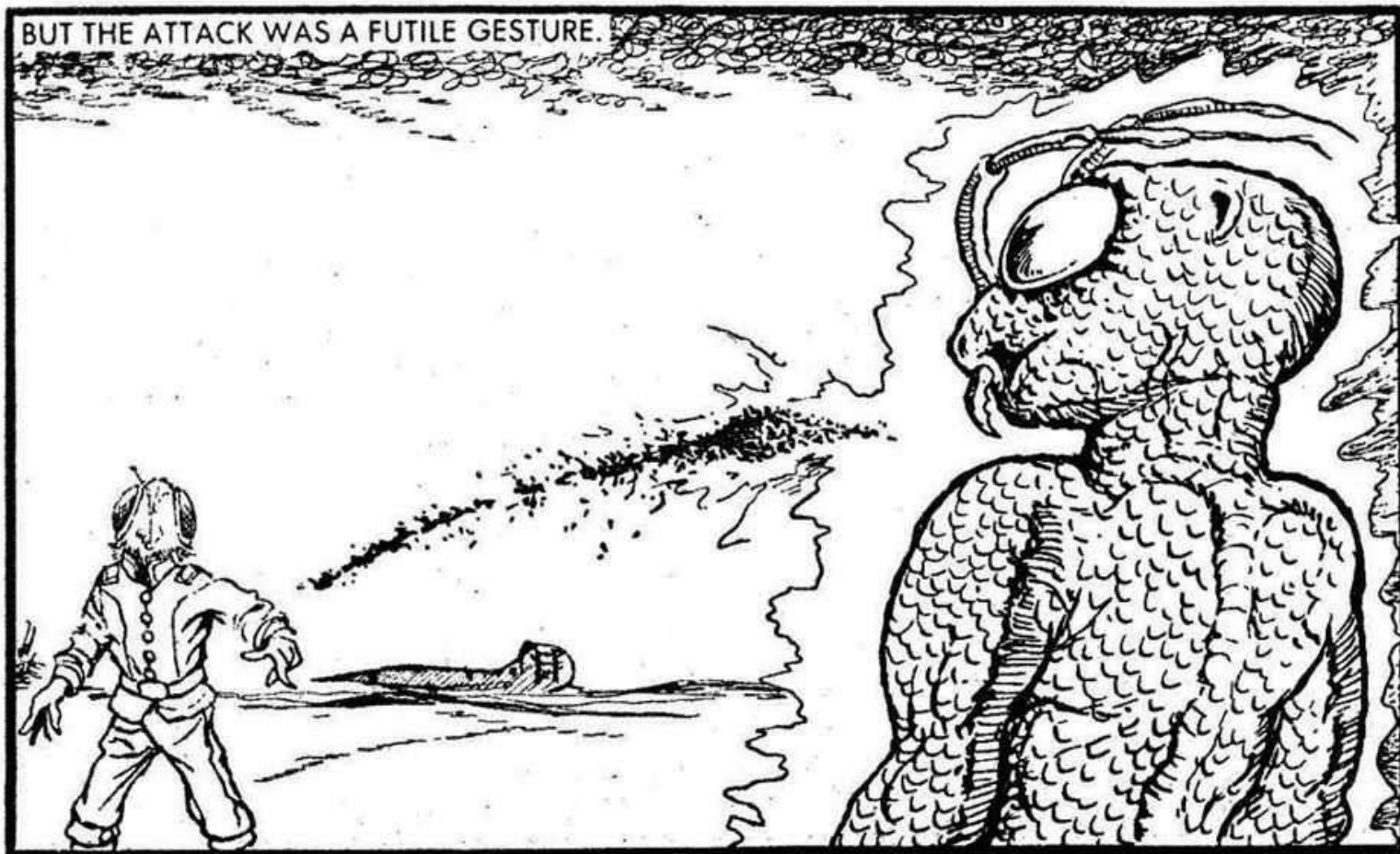
WITHOUT WARNING, A HORRIBLE CREATURE APPEARED FROM THE CITADEL.

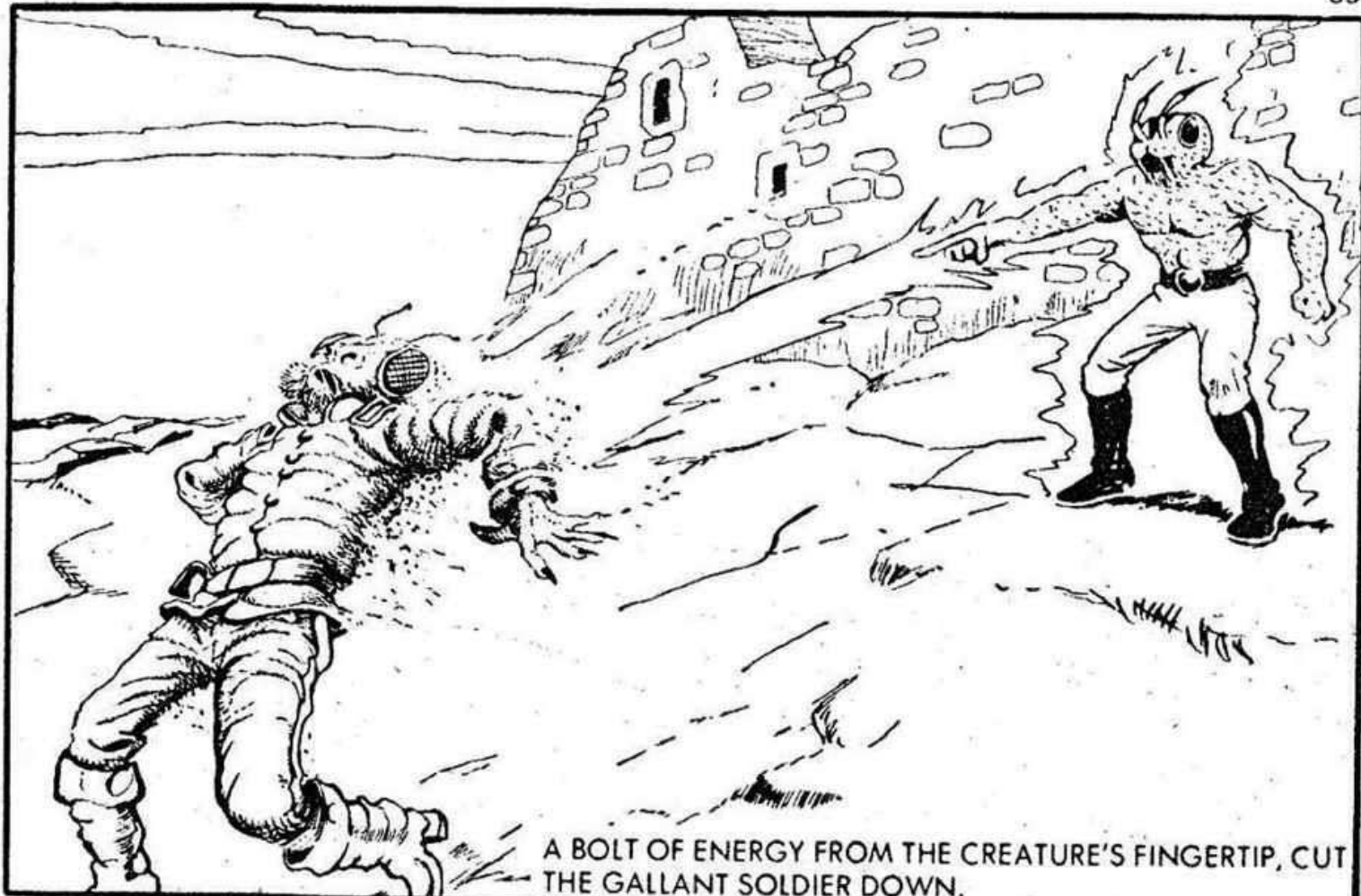


A BRAVE SOLDIER STOOD AND FACED THE CREATURE.



BUT THE ATTACK WAS A FUTILE GESTURE.





THE CLOAK OF PROTECTION MUST BE THE
ANSWER TO THEIR POWER.



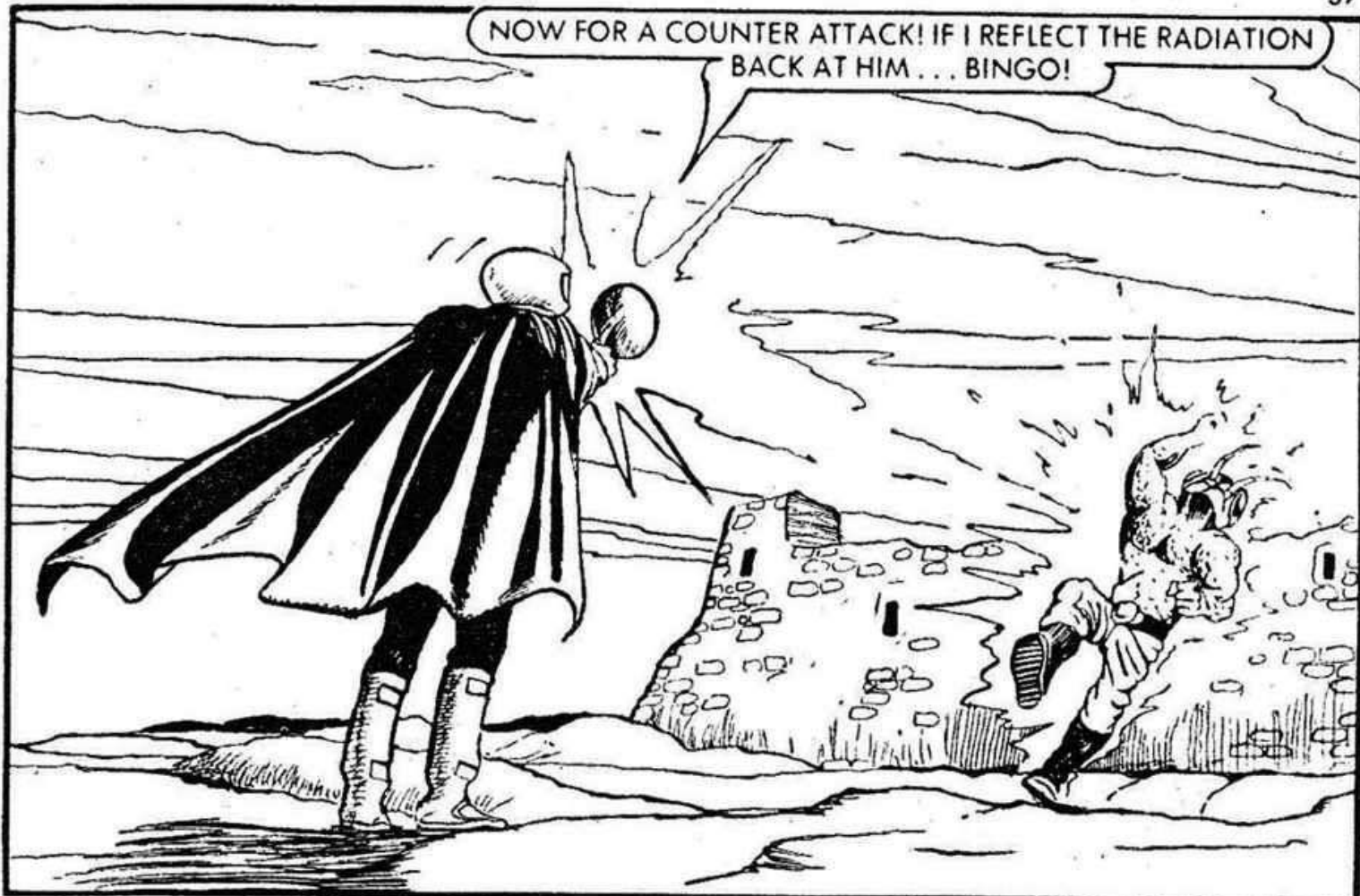
SHRAP DECIDED TO TEST HIS THEORY THE DANGEROUS WAY.

THE GUARDIAN UNLEASHED A FEARFUL BARRAGE OF RADIATION.

IT WORKS! THANK COSMOS!



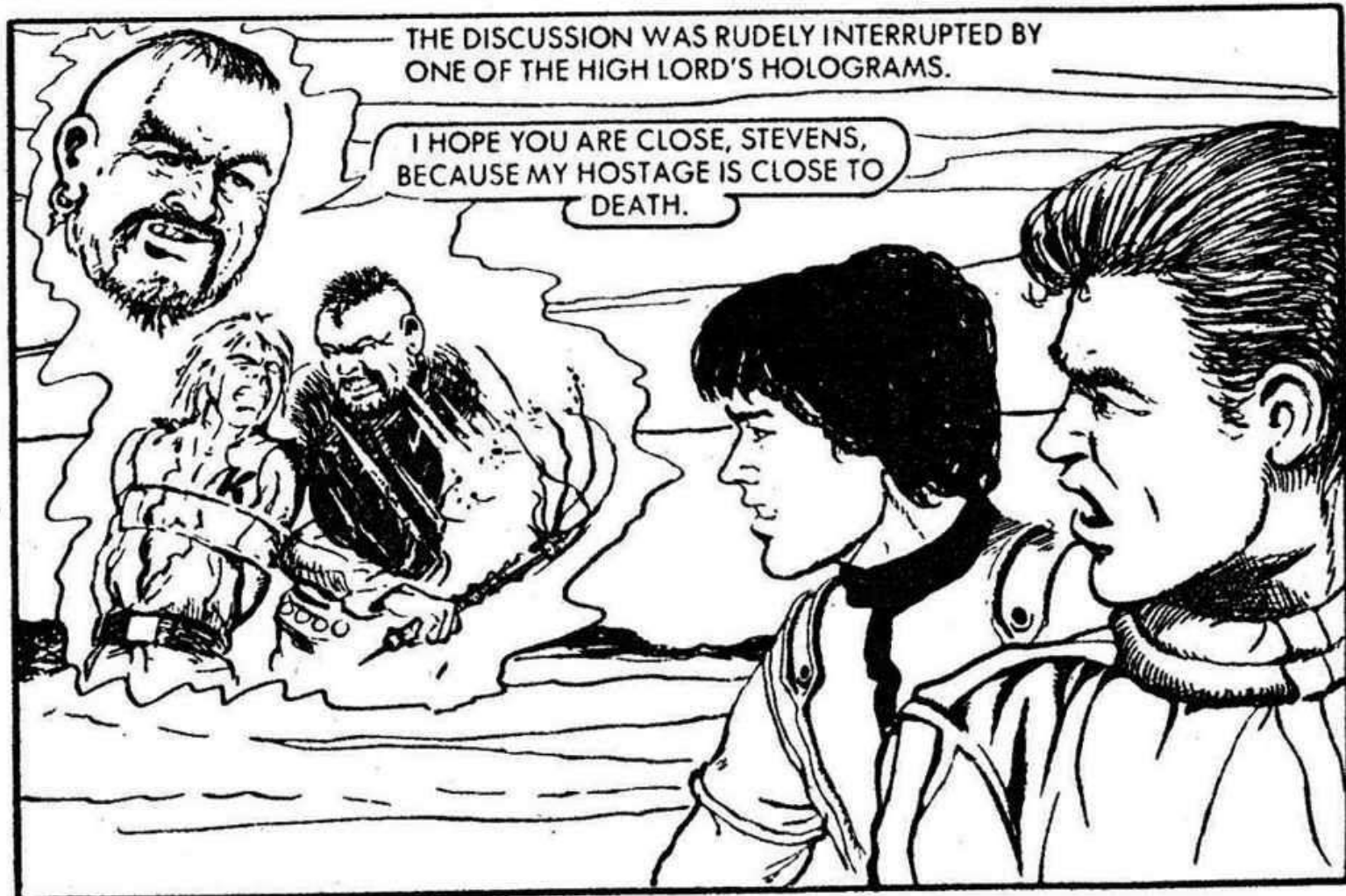
NOW FOR A COUNTER ATTACK! IF I REFLECT THE RADIATION
BACK AT HIM ... BINGO!



GET YOUR LADS TO MAKE UP
REFLECTORS LIKE THIS.

AND WE'LL PUSH THEM OFF YOUR
PLANET





THE TRANSMISSION FADED AS SUDDENLY AS IT HAD ARRIVED

FOR A HOLOGRAM
BROADCAST HE WOULD
NEED TO KNOW OUR
CO-ORDINATES. HOW DOES
THE TYRANT KNOW WHERE
WE ARE?

REMEMBER! THE FLY MEN SAID THAT
THEY SAW TWO STARS FALL? WE'VE
BEEN FOLLOWED!

BACK IN THE SHIP THE INSTRUMENTS CONFIRMED
THE THEORY

THERE IT IS! OUR RETRO-SCAN
PICKED UP ANOTHER SHIP.

OKAY! LET'S SET A TRAP FOR
THE HIGH LORD'S SPY.

WITH A DUMMY FACE AS BAIT, SHRAP WENT HUNTING.

SUCCESS DEPENDS ON
WHO SEES WHO, FIRST.



IN THAT CASE YOU HAVE FAILED.
CONGRATULATIONS ON
GAINING THE FACE. NOW I'LL
TAKE IT!



PUT THE FACE IN THIS LEAD SACK OR I'LL
DIE OF RADIATION SICKNESS. WHEN YOU
HAVE DONE SO, I WILL KILL YOU. I
WOULDN'T LIKE TO SEE YOU SUFFER.



SURPRISE! SURPRISE!



RIGHT ON TIME, MARINER. AND NOW WE HAVE
A PROTECTIVE BAG FOR THE FACE.



THE CLOAK OF PROTECTION IS BY THE TREE. I'LL
FEED FALSE DATA BACK TO THE TYRANT
TO GIVE US TIME.



I WON'T BE
LONG, I HOPE!

SHRAP MADE HIS WAY TO THE OUTER WALL
OF THE CITADEL.

NOT A SOUL IN SIGHT. I SUPPOSE THEY
THOUGHT NOTHING COULD PENETRATE
THEIR FORCE FIELD.



THAT HAS TO BE THE HOME OF THE
FACE.



WHEW! THAT'S SOME CLIMB!
STRAIGHT UP THE GLASS MOUNTAIN.



SHRAP SENSED A HOSTILE FORCE. SLIVERS OF GLASS RAINED DOWN ON HIM.

BY JUPITER! THOSE
LOOK NEEDLE SHARP!

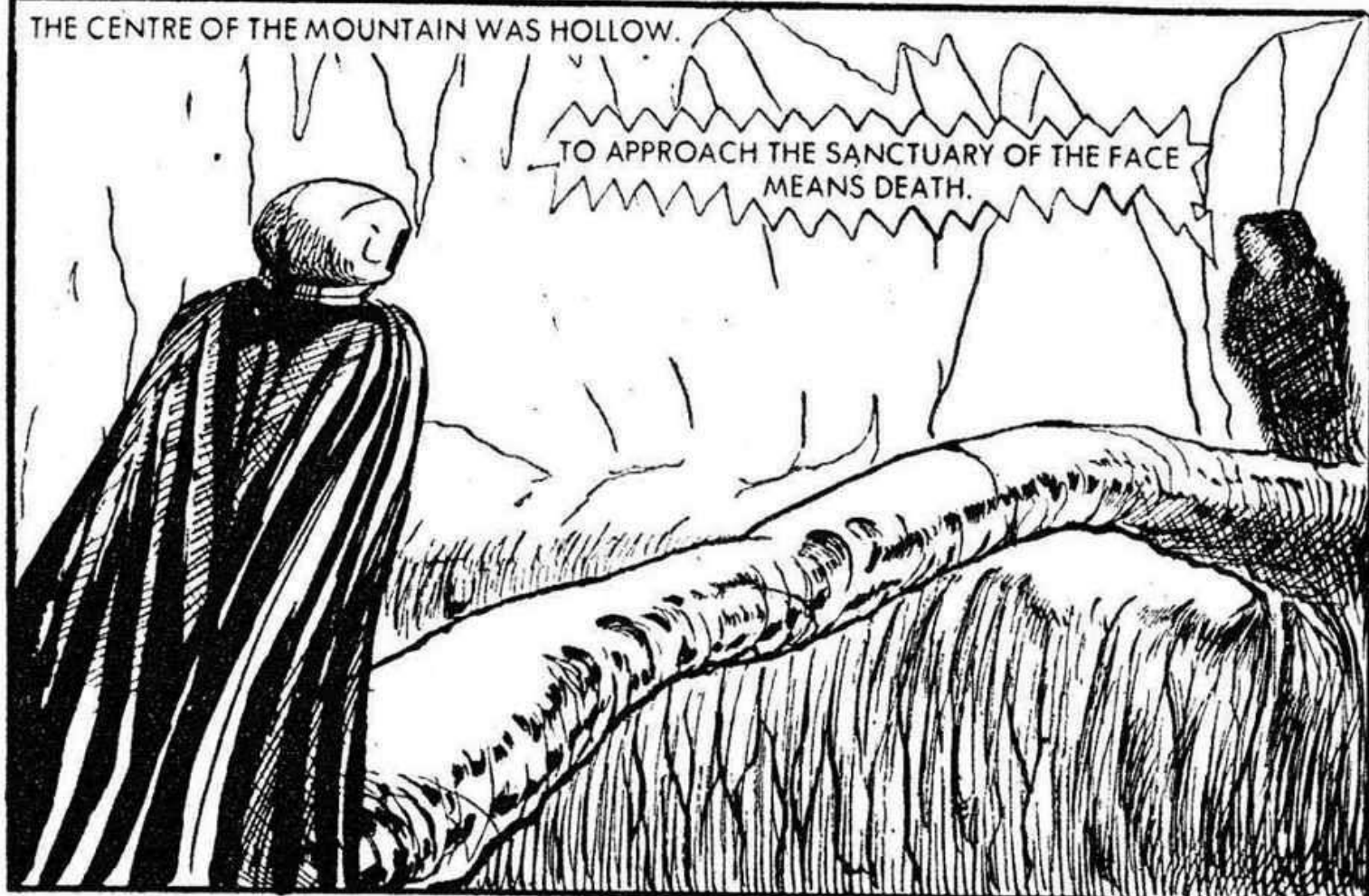




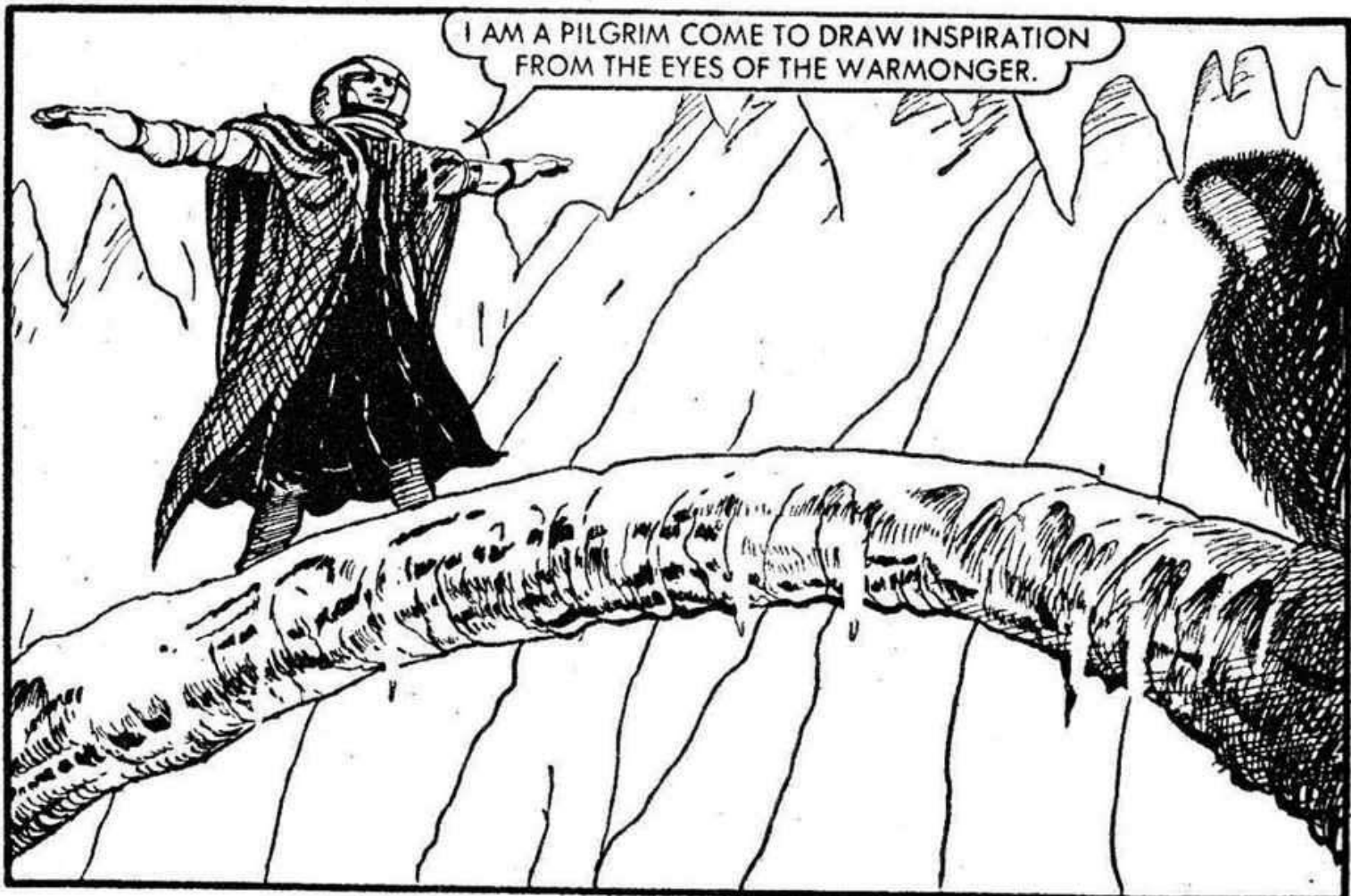
AT LAST SHRAP STOPPED CLIMBING.

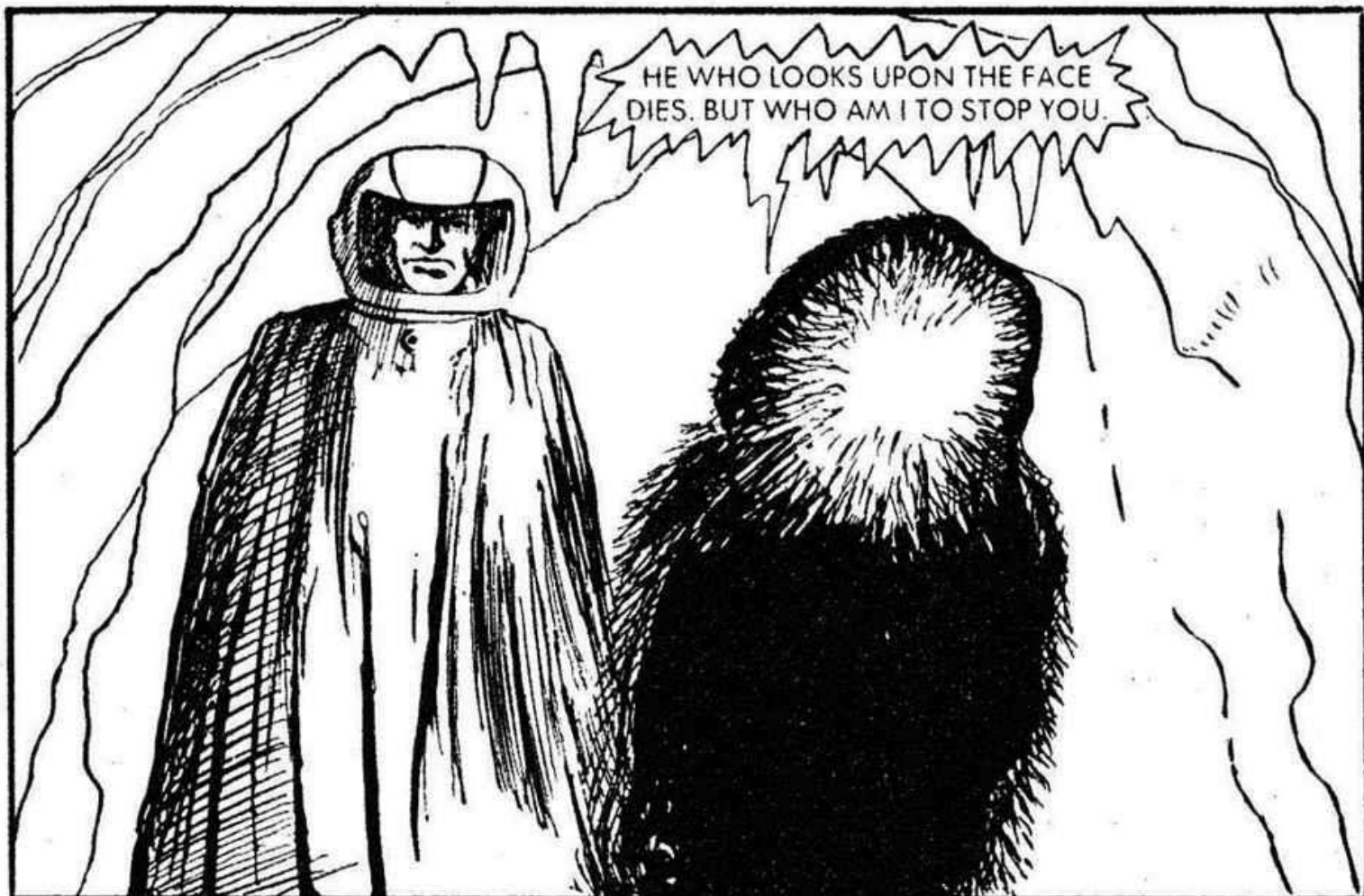


THE CENTRE OF THE MOUNTAIN WAS HOLLOW.



I AM A PILGRIM COME TO DRAW INSPIRATION
FROM THE EYES OF THE WARMONGER.





... TO REVEAL THE FACE.

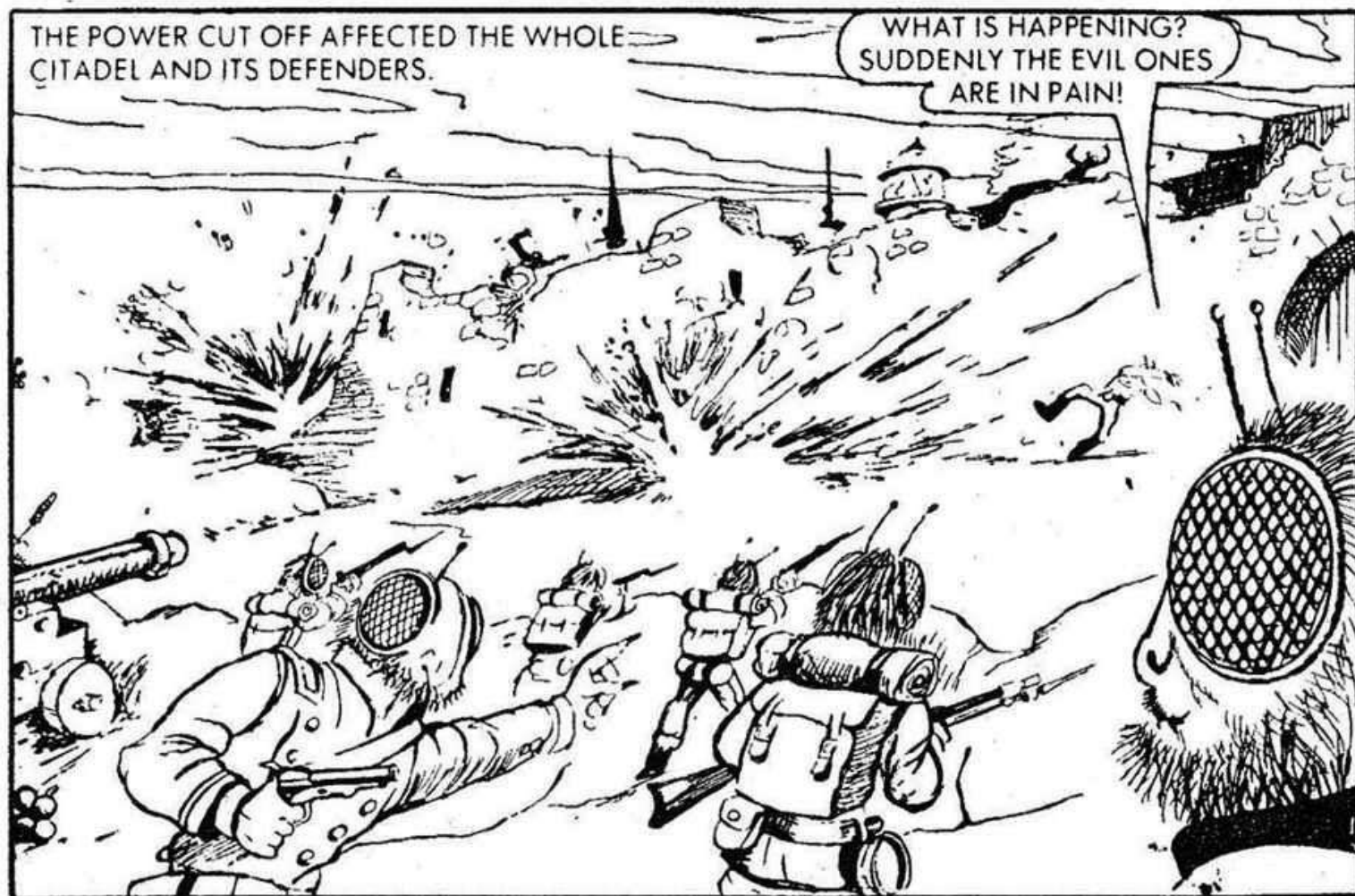
THE FIGUREHEAD HAS RETAINED THE
RADIATION FROM THE FINAL BATTLE AND
IS NOW A SOURCE OF LETHAL ENERGY!
LOOK YOUR LAST ON THE FACE OF
FEAR!





THE FEARFUL FACE WAS
VEILED IN THE LEAD SACK,
THUS CUTTING OFF ITS
DEADLY RADIATION.





THE EVIL ONES ARE
POWERLESS. WE SHALL BEAT
THEM.



WITH THE BATTLE WON, MARINER BLASTED OFF TO HELP SHRAP.



SHRAP WAS IN BIG TROUBLE ON THE GLASS MOUNTAIN.

THIS PLACE WAS ONLY
HELD TOGETHER BY THE
FACE'S POWER. I'LL BE
BURIED ALIVE!

MARINER PROVIDED SHRAP WITH HIS
ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPE.

THAT'S MY LIFE-LINE.



SHRAP JUMPED BLINDLY INTO A WORLD
OF SPINTERING GLASS.



INSTINCT CLOSED HIS HAND AROUND THE
TRAILING ROPE.



FULL AHEAD FOR DEEP
SPACE! THAT'S THE LAST
I WANT TO SEE OF
PLANETS!

THE SEEKERS RETURNED TO THE SILENT WORLD, TRANSHIPPED TO THEIR YACHT, AND SET COURSE FOR THE HIGH LORD'S PLEASURE SPHERE.

NO, SHRAP! WE DAREN'T GIVE THAT TYRANT THE FACE.

SORRY, MARINER! THAT WAS MY BARGAIN.





SHRAP THREW THE YACHT INTO A SPIN.





IN HIS PLEASURE SPHERE, THE HIGH LORD REVELLED ...

FOR AFTER DINNER ENTERTAINMENT
I WILL PRESENT THE PAINFUL DEATHS
OF MY PRISONERS!



UNEXPECTEDLY THE ENTERTAINMENT HALTED ...

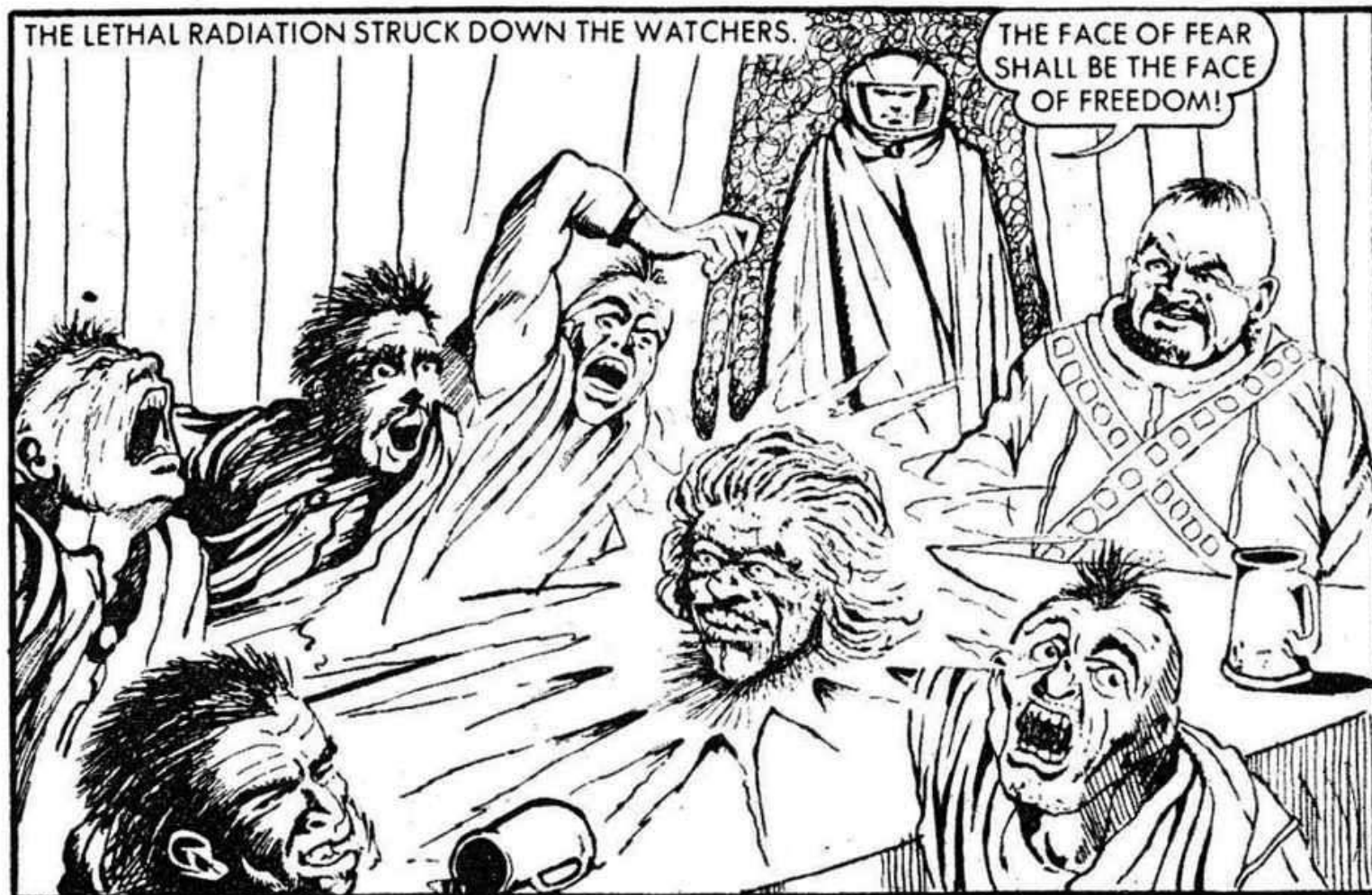
I HAVE RETURNED
WITH YOUR FACE OF
FEAR.

LOOK YOUR LAST!
YOU MURDERING
SWINE.



THE LETHAL RADIATION STRUCK DOWN THE WATCHERS.

THE FACE OF FEAR
SHALL BE THE FACE
OF FREEDOM!





THE HIGH LORD
SUDDENLY LUNGED AT
SHRAP WITH A CLAW
SPEAR.

ONE TEAR OF YOUR SUIT
AND YOU'RE DEAD.



HE'S GETTING TOO CLOSE!

THIS SUIT IS SLOWING ME
DOWN—BUT I CAN'T TAKE IT
OFF.



I WILL BURN YOU
OUT OF EXISTENCE!



PAINFULLY SHRAP RAISED HIS REFLECTIVE SHIELD.





MARINER REVEALED THAT HE WAS AN AGENT OF THE GALATIC POLICE.



KIDD AND THE PASSENGERS,
ALTHOUGH ILL-TREATED, WERE STILL
ALIVE.

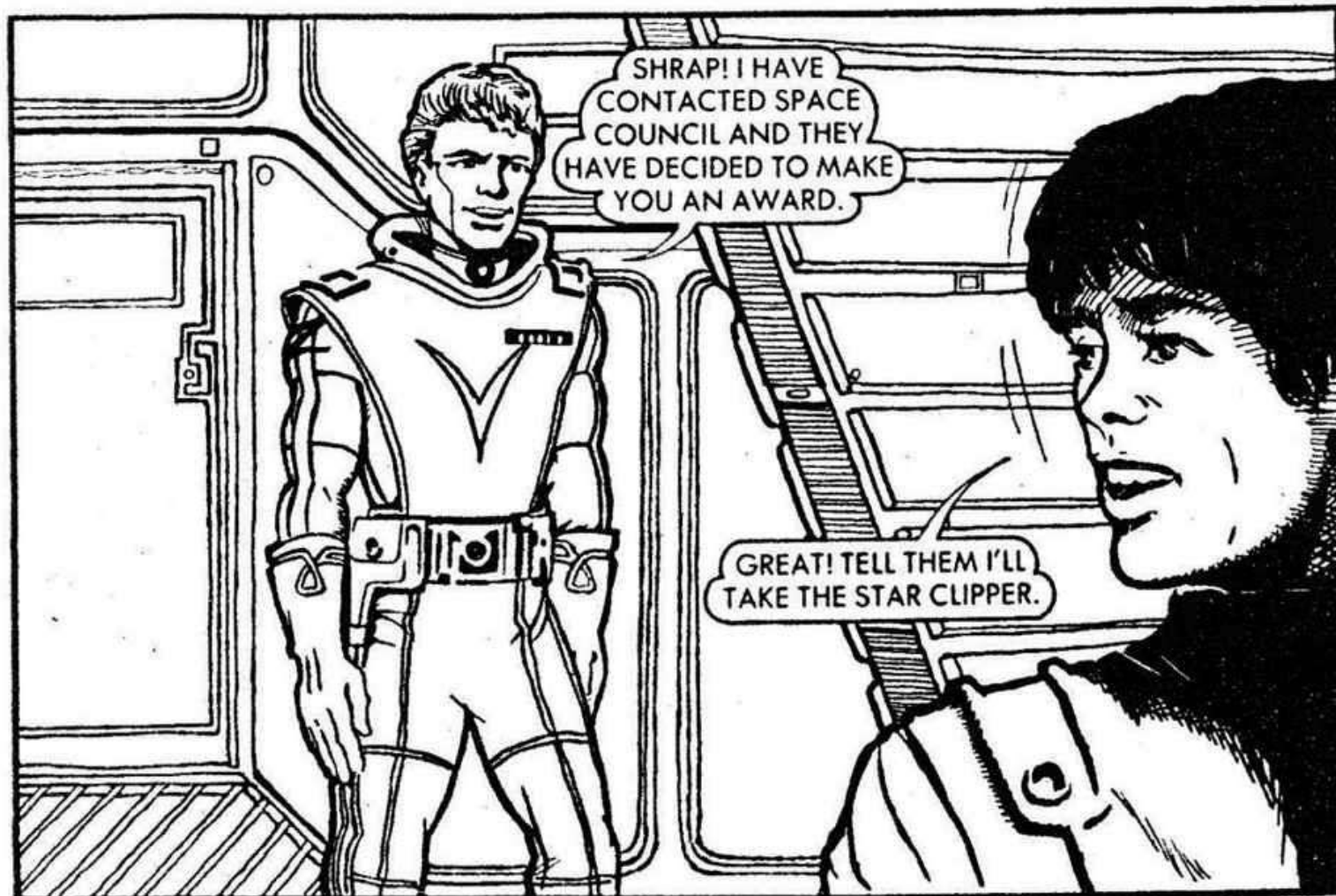
WHAT KEPT
YOU SO LONG?

IT TOOK TIME
TO GET AHEAD!



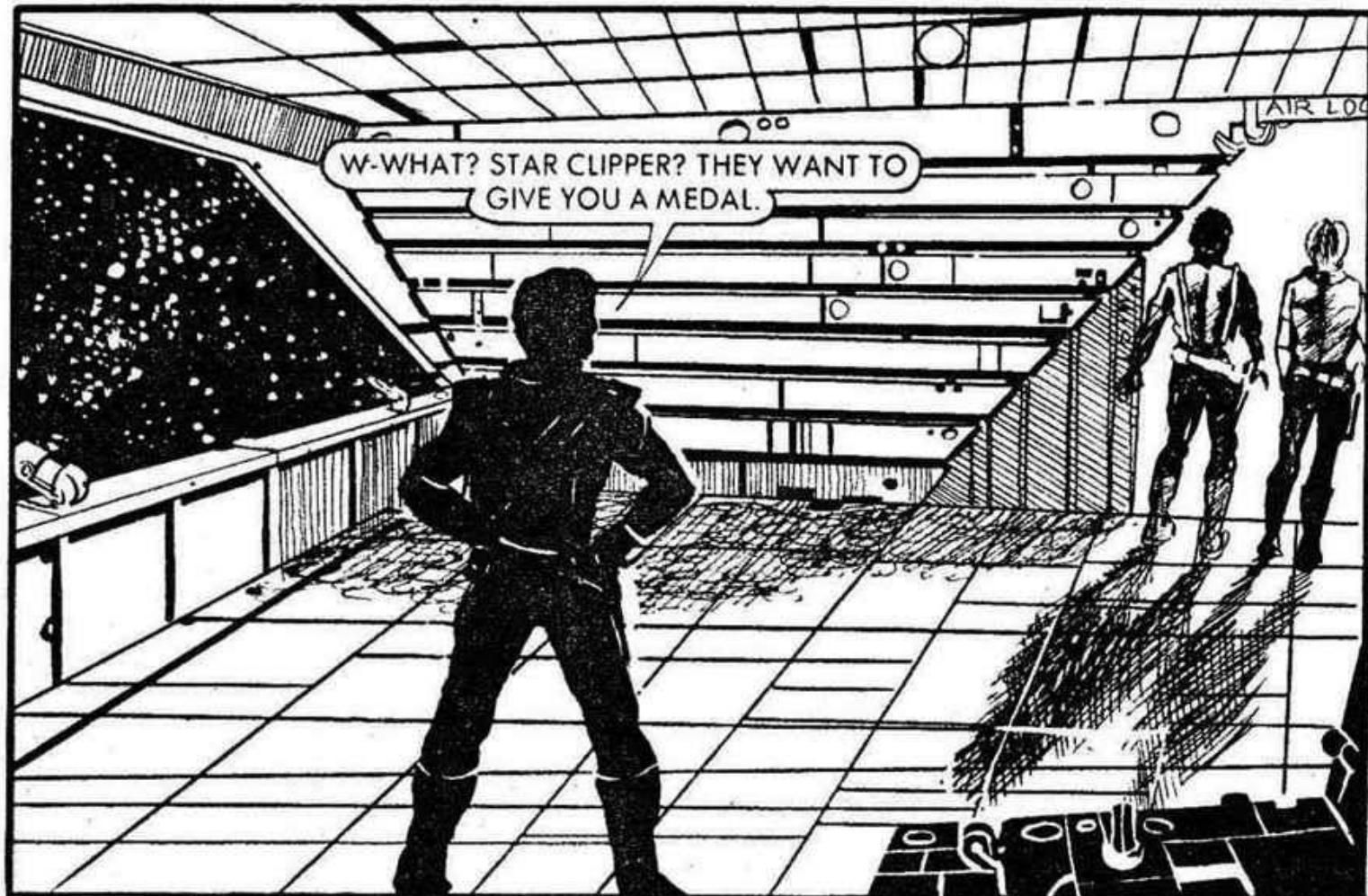
OUR SHIP NEEDS
A LOT OF REPAIR WORK.

I'M THINKING THERE IS
ANOTHER SHIP
WITHOUT AN OWNER.



SHRAP! I HAVE
CONTACTED SPACE
COUNCIL AND THEY
HAVE DECIDED TO MAKE
YOU AN AWARD.

GREAT! TELL THEM I'LL
TAKE THE STAR CLIPPER.



SHRAP TOOK THE HIGH LORD'S SHIP.



SHRAP SET COURSE FOR DEEP SPACE.

HEY, SHRAP! THEY'RE
FIRING AT US.

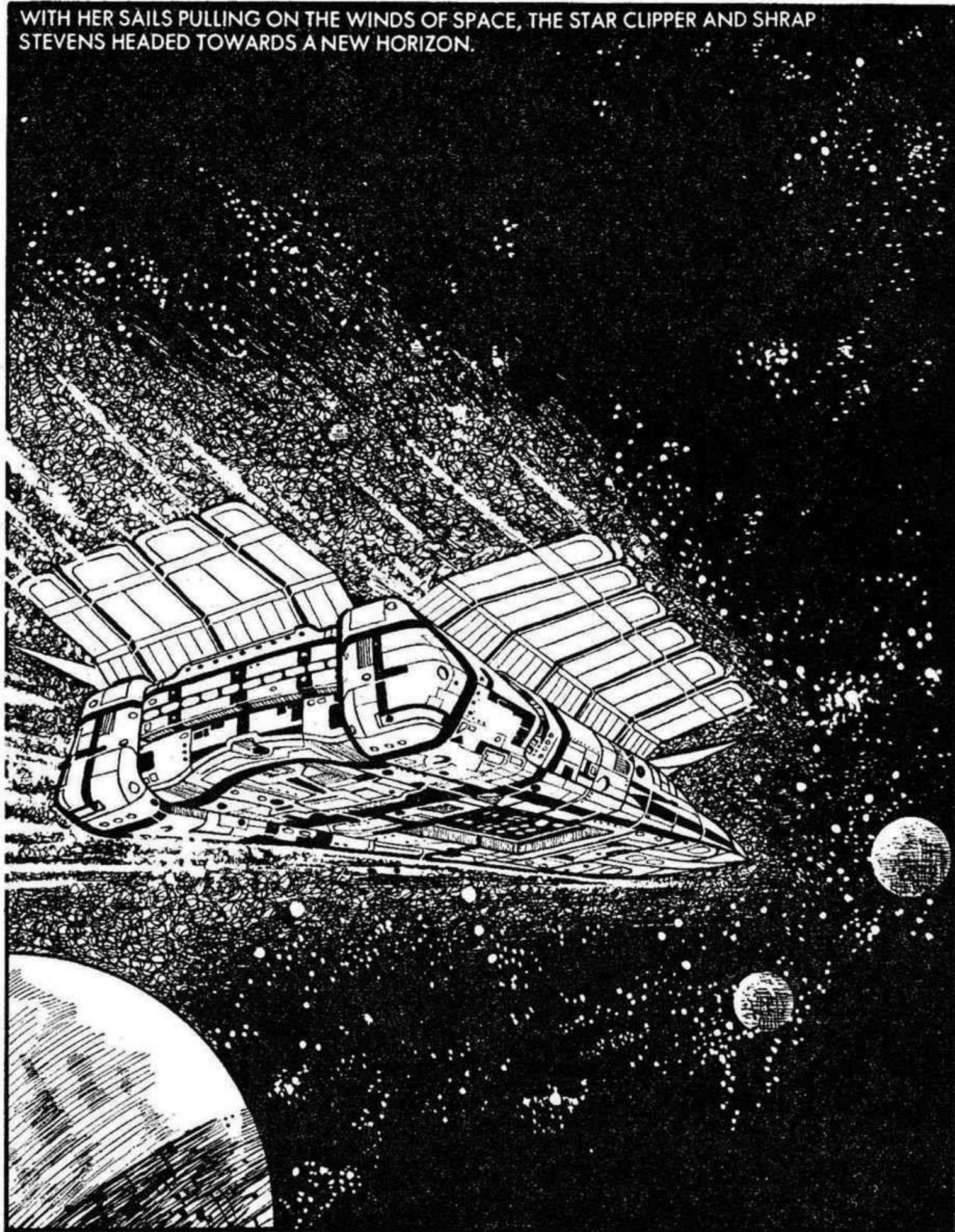
NO WAY, KIDD! THAT'S THE FACE HEADING
FOR DESTRUCTION IN THE NEAREST SUN.

THE STAR CLIPPER ACCELERATED AWAY FROM
THE PLEASURE SPHERE.

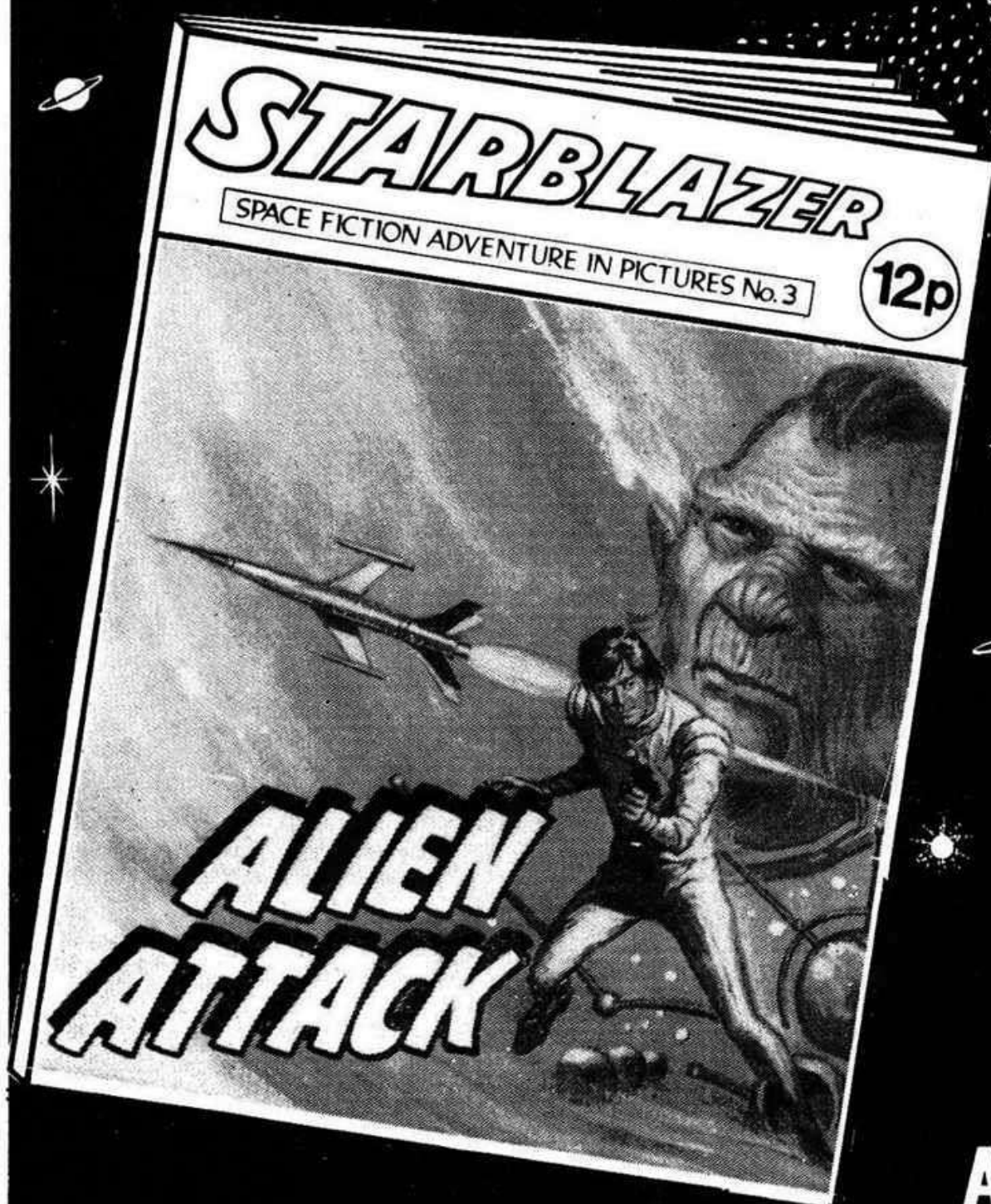
YOU COULD'VE BEEN A HERO
IF YOU'D STAYED BACK THERE.

YOU DON'T GET PAID FOR BEING A HERO.
THIS IS MY LIFE . . . DODGING THE
SPACE COPS, AND AVOIDING TAXES.

WITH HER SAILS PULLING ON THE WINDS OF SPACE, THE STAR CLIPPER AND SHRAP STEVENS HEADED TOWARDS A NEW HORIZON.



**DON'T MISS OUR NEXT
GREAT SPACE ADVENTURE**



**IT'S ON
SALE
NEXT
MONTH
AT YOUR
NEWSAGENT'S**

STARBLAZERS

IN THE CONQUEST
OF SPACE (2)

The first attempt by the Americans to launch a satellite was a failure—the rocket exploded on the launch pad on 6th December 1957. Another rocket team were given orders to launch a satellite and succeeded. The team, led by Dr Werner von Braun, fired a Jupiter C rocket which took Explorer 1 into orbit on 31st January 1958. The pencil-shaped satellite made a momentous discovery—the Earth was encircled by two belts of radiation-trapped particles from the sun. These were named the Van Allen radiation belts after the man who designed the equipment for the satellite.

